

Collectors Editions - ALAN MOORE'S UNDERCLASSY UNDERGROUND MAGAZINE

DODGEM LOGIC

August - September

FOR ADULTS ONLY

Only £3.50

2010

PHIL
*BURIES THE
HATCHET*

plus

BRIAN
DOUGIE
FRANKIE
CLAIRE
ROSALIND
MARION
WARREN
CHARLIE &
GEORGE

SPRING BOROUGHES *ISSUE*

By ALAN MOORE

Photos by MITCH JENKINS

Exclusive:

OUT OF THE STRONG
CAME SWEETNESS

ISSN 2043-7919





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Alan Moore

A fifth-generation Boroughs pikey born St. Edmund's Hospital, 1953. Alan rose to become Spring Lane School's head boy in 1964 and only went off the rails after moving from the neighbourhood. Now a harmless shuffling grandfather, he says he doesn't want any trouble. His interests include whippets and sorcery.



Mitch Jenkins

Hailing from Ramsgate in 1962 before growing up on Northampton's bracing Eastern District, it's Mitch's saucy seaside postcard demeanour that has made him a top end-of-pier snapper. Used to photograph kids with a tame monkey, but it went rabid. Ask him for his philosophy and he just looks at you.

Paul Chessell

After his privileged 1970 origins in Reading (which means "Land of Gold"), art director Paul was so traumatised by visiting the Boroughs that he's since become a holy man, subsisting entirely on a diet of string and confetti. Losing four stone in three months, he can now communicate with woodpeckers.



George

Born 1943, straight out of Watford, George started tending the green space behind St. Luke's House casually, but realised gardening might bring the community together. Opening whenever possible, he wants to include a play area; maybe a miniature golf course. "No politics, no old shit histories between people, no trouble."

Dougie

Barnsley boy Dougie hit Arundel Street in 1954, aged two. He appreciated the characters, shell-shocked WWI veteran Whistling Walter, berserk bikers or Mad Frank singing his way into the Essoldo Cinema. Too streetwise for bullshit, he loves the streets and community down in the Boroughs. "I'm just who I am."

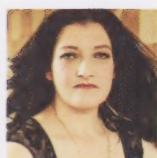


Frankie

Born St. Kitts in 1955, Frankie reached Northampton's Military Road School a few years later. A psychiatric orderly with great musical taste, Frankie's all about the Boroughs' history: "All the street names have their stories; all the tunnels under them. It's a historic place. Everybody looks out for each other."

Charlie

Edinburgh, 1947, that's Charlie's vintage. Mental about fly fishing, photography and building model aeroplanes he refers to his girlfriend as 'Hen', hoping for that golden egg everyone knows she's got in her. Dodgem Logic's wheelman, Charlie's just had a fantastic holiday in Scotland and can't wait to go back.



Claire

Born 1958 in Northampton's now-derelict St. Edmund's hospital, Claire has stolen loads of land in Spring Boroughs, grown vegetables and encouraged others to do likewise. Interested in gardening, art and mushrooms, Claire has worn a kilt and loves everybody, then wakes up with a headache and an unfamiliar tattoo.

Rosalind

Blossoming from Adstone (halfway to Banbury) in 1941, Rosalind worked as an Express Lifts secretary and produced Claire. She thinks 'bollocks' is a lovely word, covering a multitude of sins. "It's not great when people overdose on your doorstep, but apart from that it's brilliant. I've got a lovely flat."



Brian

Born here in 1993, Brian loves football, ice-skating, most physical stuff, and is at tenth prestige level seventy in X-Box's *Call of Duty*. Always polite, Brian says there are worse places than Spring Boroughs. He wants to create a game for Microsoft, then buy a three bedroom house with maids.

Warren

Debating in Birmingham, 1971, Warren is either at the gym or following his interest in graphic design and art. He wants a studio, perhaps a gallery to show his work, and says Spring Boroughs is what you make of it; somewhere where people pull together. "Do you know what I mean?"



Phil

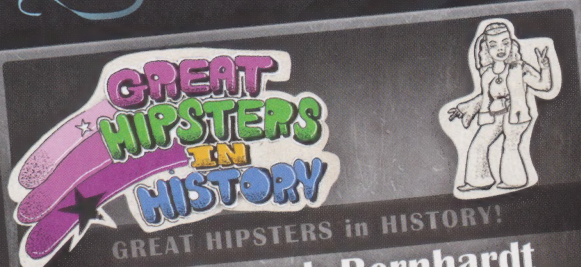
Born 1957 and a sailor at fifteen, Phil spent his early life in, near, or underneath the sea. "The sea is me, and of me." A keen fiddle-player, he calls Spring Boroughs 'Bring Sparrows' and thinks that the council sees its residents as rabbits in the headlights. Wed three times with loads of kids, he's a bad lad and a bad dad.

Marion

Born Belfast in the spring of 1990, Marion is now a Boroughs beauty who would love more than anything to travel the world. Dazzlingly normal, Marion is always in and out of college. She loves socialising, shopping, and going out with her friends. "I'm a typical girl, to be honest."

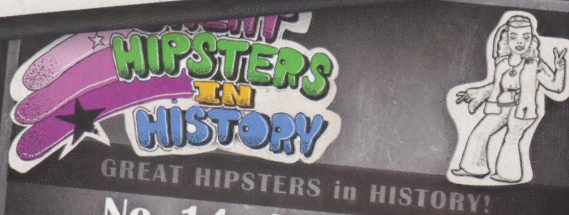


Great Hipsters in History



No. 13: Sarah Bernhardt

Born of an unknown father in Paris, 1844, Sarah Bernhardt studied acting from age 13 and by the 1870s had earned her reputation as 'The Divine Sarah'. An icon for the Decadents and inspiration for artist Alphonse Mucha, she slept in a coffin, was an accomplished sculptor and had many lovers, including female French Impressionist painter Louise Abbéma. A silent movie pioneer, she made her screen debut as Hamlet in 1900, but by 1915 had lost her right leg to gangrene. Continuing to act without a prosthesis, this 'silvery voiced' legend died in 1923, the 19th century's most celebrated actress.



No. 14 : Mata Hari

Margaretha Geertruida Zelle, Friesland-born in 1876, saw her family disintegrate in bankruptcy, divorce and bereavement. Surviving a turbulent and abusive marriage, by 1905 she'd found fame as exotic dancer Mata Hari, Indonesian for 'eye of the day.' Known for revealing costumes, she'd ridden naked on a jewelled stallion at Natalie Barney's lesbian salons and was a noted courtesan, conducting affairs with many powerful men which, during World War One, led to suspicions of espionage. Unjustly accused of spying for Germany she was executed by firing squad in 1917, but in 1985 was completely exonerated. Her only crime was sexiness.



No. 15 : Leonora Carrington

Last of the original surrealists, Leonora Carrington was born in Lancashire, 1917. Expelled from two schools for rebellion, she saw her first surrealist painting aged ten and at twenty became partner of the brilliant Max Ernst. Ernst's arrests by French authorities and later the Gestapo provoked a breakdown, ending their relationship and leading Carrington to seek refuge in Mexico, where she lives and works to this day on her haunting canvases and visionary writings. Now 93, a shamanic inspiration to artists such as Alejandro Jodorowsky, her current exhibition at Chichester's Pallant House Gallery closes on September 12th, 2010.



DON'T TOUCH THAT DIAL

Don't leave me this way. Don't swallow that anvil. Don't marry that iguana. Don't put your daughter on the stage, Mrs. Worthington. Don't worship cutlery. Don't piss on my back and tell me it's raining. Don't sleep in the subway, darling. Don't make me come in there. Don't lick that electricity. Don't go breaking my heart. Don't stand so close to Sting. Don't make friends with gravy. Don't laugh at Danger, it can't help it. Don't let the stars get in your pants, don't let the moon break your nose. Don't try to change me, baby. Don't go there. Don't look back in Anglia. Don't be sarcastic with werewolves. Don't you wish your girlfriend was hot like me. Don't elect anybody made of Lego. Don't look now, it's the scary bit with Donald Sutherland and the dwarf. Don't touch me there. Don't have a cow, man. Don't lend money to celery. Don't say anything, just hold me. Don't swerve for ghosts. Don't tell me how to live, I'm me and not you. Don't you be messin' with me, fool. Don't flirt with your firing squad. Don't trust anybody over three. On a more positive note, welcome to Dodgem Logic.

This issue we get all *Vanity Fair* on your ass with Mitch Jenkins' and Paul Chessell's cover-featured cavalcade of Spring Boroughs *bon vivants*, to accompany which I've done a poem. Continuing this lyric theme, momentarily, we are honoured to present the first chapter of legendary Tyneside poetic giant Tom Pickard's astounding autobiography-in-progress, along with a sample of the sublime Steve Aylett's latest *Beerlight* narrative, just when you were getting used to all the pigs and octopi. We're also proud to entertain the pious presence of funky fundamentalist, the Alabama Three's very Reverend D. Wayne Love (and if you haven't shoplifted their *Revolver Soul* yet then truly you are as one already damned) with his testifying on fun-loving criminal Jean Genet. Mouseketeer of the Apocalypse Melinda Gebbie muses on the nervous nuclear 1980s and her stint as animation-serf on Raymond Briggs' devastating *When the Wind Blows*. Conversely, metro-cidal Margaret Killjoy gloats informatively over the forthcoming rubble of snivelization in a helpful guide to life after the collapse. Josie Long and Robin Ince continue to embody 'before' and 'after' pictures for the Disillusionment Diet, while sleaze-sleuth Steve Holland deals out the dirt on pulp publishing for twenty bucks a day plus expenses and all the dames, tomatoes and cuties he can objectify. Barney Farmer and Lee Healey deliver another heart-warming and gently whimsical look at modern life, David Quantick and Savage Pencil slap culture around until it ain't so pretty anymore, and Kevin O'Neill goes some way to answering the age-old question "is everything all right, Kev?"

Plus there's more special-forces soil and sustenance from Claire Ashby, our Eco-chamberlain Dave Hamilton discusses counter-currencies, Wendi Jarrett gets dependably delicious, Tamsyn Payne suggests something for the gentleman, Doctors Feelgood and Nervy dish up their diagnoses, sidewalk surfer David Underwood tells us how he rolls, Illuzion encounters a Ku Klux Kanine, our Noho notables lavish locally-sourced laments and lullabies, with the whole thing topped off by a dash of Musson & Associates' piquant Mustard. You see how we look after you?

On a more serious note I want to take some time out to say goodbye to my friend the magnificent Harvey Pekar, Cleveland's greatest son, author and star of *American Splendour*, single-handed inventor of autobiographical comics, eloquent lover of life's exquisite mundane details, blue-collar hero who went splendidly off-message by bellowing about a then-ongoing network strike over the increasingly loud end credits of the Letterman Show, and one of the very finest, most humane and most insightful writers that the comics medium will ever produce. He's going to leave a hangdog hole in the hearts of everyone who knew him or read his work, and me and Melinda and everybody at Dodgem Logic send all our love to his fantastic wife Joyce and amazing daughter Danielle. Thanks for existing, Harvey, and we're all going to miss you. You were principled, and honourable, and above all you were completely, gloriously real. Take it easy.

Okay, I'm all done. Next issue we've got Iain Sinclair casting a precision-ground eye over the woman who painted J.G. Ballard, Dick Foreman disserting on Underground Comix and, with any luck, master of hostile reiteration Stewart Lee on how his brilliant recent analysis of stand-up has almost certainly ruined comedy for all time so that nobody anywhere will ever laugh again. Join us in October for an autumnal romp through the fallen leaves. Seasonal affect disorder will never have seemed sexier.

— Alan Moore ~ Princess of People's Hearts and Sultan of Swing. —

DODGEM LOGIC: WHO DEALT THIS MESS?

Alan Moore ~ Has been dead for years, but revealing that would hurt sales. **Tony Bennett** ~ Co-publisher and respected easy-listening crooner.

Queen Calluz ~ Some kind of crazy, koo-koo super-editor. **Downtown Joe Brown** ~ Assistant crazy, koo-koo super-editor.

Gavin and Alix Wallace ~ Design, in a mine, where a million diamonds shine.

Claire Ashby ~ International woman of mystery.

CONTENTS

CONTENTS

Fold out wrap around cover: Spring Boroughs Special featuring our resplendent cover star Phil – Photos: Mitch Jenkins / Layout: Paul Chessell
Inside cover: The stars of our Spring Boroughs Special / Hipsters from History – words by Alan Moore / Artwork by Calluz

Page 1 Editorial, Contents and Indicia – Telling you like it is
Page 2-9 Spring Boroughs Special: From that Dirt – Words: Alan Moore
Photos: Mitch Jenkins / Layout: Paul Chessell
Page 10-11 'The Wastepaper Basket of My Mind' by Robin Ince
Page 12-13 'Genet – Short, Bad & Beautiful' by the Rev. D. Wayne Love
Page 14-19 'The Perfect Storm' by Steve Holland – The story of the 18&6 penny dreadfuls
Page 20-21 'The Eco Chamber: No Man's an Island' by Dave Hamilton
Page 22-23 'The Daily Mustard' by Alex Musson – Some gamish, sir?
Page 24-26 'Bye, Monster' by Steve Aylett – Once read, not forgotten!
Page 27 'Louis Wain' by Savage Pencil & David Quantick
Page 28-29 'Burroughs' by Alan Moore – William S. remembered
Page 30-41 'More Pricks Than Prizes' – An excerpt from the memoirs of Tom Pickard
Page 42 'World of Illuzion' by Lejorne Pindling – Prejudice in an unexpected guise...
Page 43 'Bwoken Bwitin' by Barney Farmer & Lee Healey
Page 44-45 'How to Survive the Collapse of Civilization' by Margaret Killjoy

Page 46-47 'Skateboarding is not a crime' by David Underwood
Page 48-49 'My Stupid Opinions' by Josie Long
Page 50-53 'Blown by the Wind' by Melinda Gebbie – An animated tale
Page 54 Shameless Merchandise page – We're in a recession don't you know
Page 55 An exquisitely rendered window into the mind of Kevin O'Neill
Page 56-57 'The Spinning Doctors – Keep Learning / 12 Steps in the wrong direction' by Doctor Feelgood / Nervy
Page 58-59 'Eat to the Beat: Jamaican Jerked Chicken / Moore(ish) Berry Trifle' by Wendi Jarrett – Yum Yum!
Page 60-61 'The Urban Guerrilla Gardener' by Claire Ashby – Our grass roots revolutionary
Page 62-63 'Stitch This' by Tamsyn Payne – Don't 'Jacket' in just yet! (Sorry)
Page 64 Who is responsible for all this? I want their names. I haven't got all day

Notes From NoHo:

Page 1-3 'The Return of Vince Dates' by Martin Marprelate
Page 4-5 'Are Your Dreams 3 Sizes Too Big at night? The Art of Spacemen 3' by Gary Ingham
Page 6-7 'Beyond the Norm' by Norman Adams
Page 8 'Sarajevo nights' by Alan Moore

Heroic Couplets by ALAN MOORE

Photos by MITCH JENKINS

FROM THAT *DIRT*

Heroic couplets: that's what this place needs;
a tread to suit its diamonds and their deeds.
So, risking doggerel in the dogshit curled,
down College Street I chased a tumbled world,
from The Criterion end commenced research
through the whore latitudes and past the church
where long, hard years had scabbed the valley lip,
with WASTE SOLUTIONS lettered on a skip

and Calluz' spray-can nest on the top floor.
I jabbed her numbers in beside the door,
requiring her familiarity
with my old streets in her new century;
breathed ghosts while waiting for her to appear.
I used to go to Boy's Brigade down here
like Uncle Jack, that child-soldier romance
that got him blown to bits somewhere in France

and nothing left except a chiselled name.
He'd smoked belt-buckles in the candle flame,
like me had rubbed raw brass up from black muck
but in a different time, with different luck
where he was traded for a telegram.
The heavy door spring-loaded on its slam
lunged out, reluctant, and she tottered through
with eyes absconded from a Moonlight Zoo

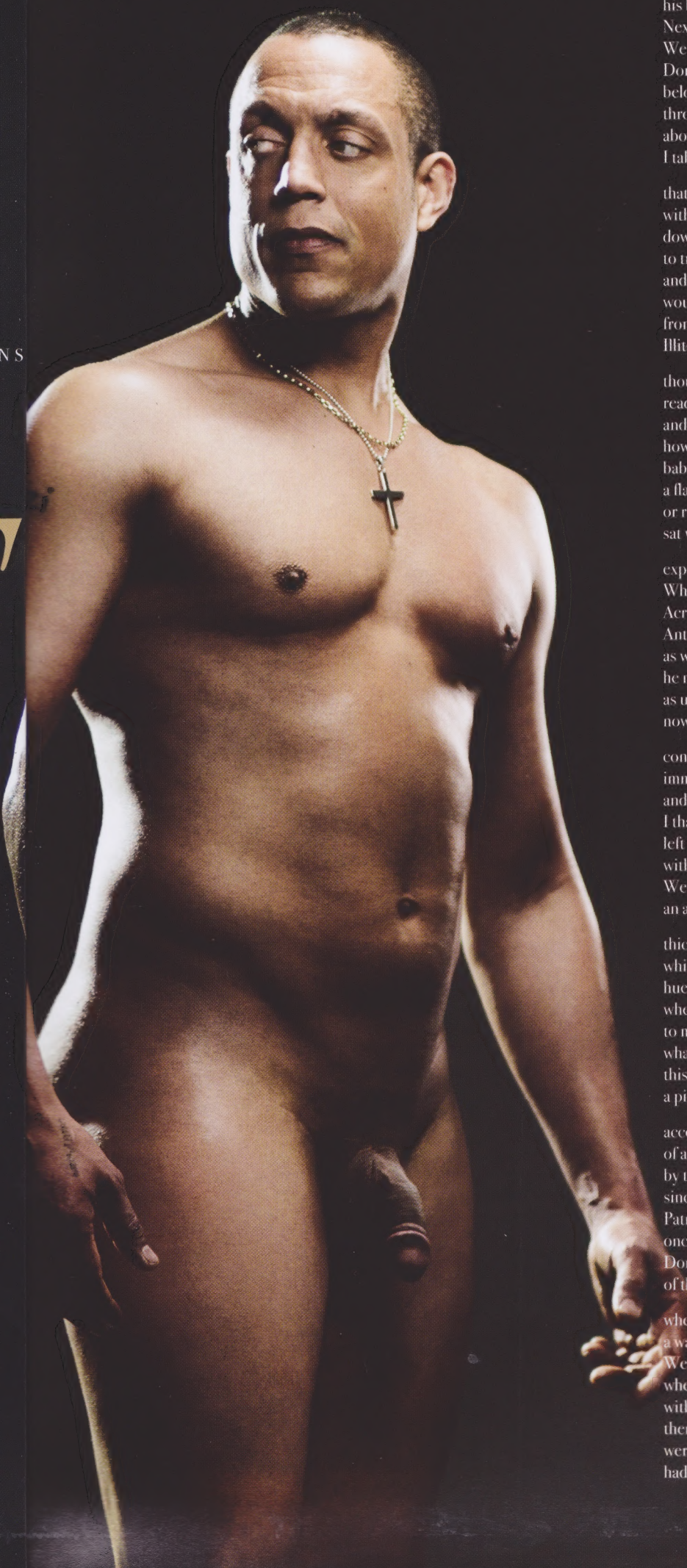
to find clean canvas in a dirty wall.
Down through the chip-shop's warm acetate pall
we strolled, she rolled a spindly cigarette.
The painted light in Gold Street was still wet
on widened pavements, sparkled like a fuse
where they pawned rings and persecuted Jews
back in the day; where that Lancaster fell
in wartime, scything past the Grand Hotel,

my teenage mother watching it descend
over West Bridge from blacked-out Jimmy's End
to smash the brickwork here and, it appears,
wreak far less harm than the ensuing years
upon the incline where we made descent,
with more crased the further down we went.
A Pilgrim's Progress for the present day,
we passed BOOZE CITY just across the way

where Giant Despair's address had been revised;
by stealth, street gradually pedestrianised,
trade down to trickles from a steady flow:
once half the town, according to Defoe
while on his Crusoe cruise of English shires.
The dancehalls down here kindled the desires
that made me, and there were celestial nights
with Shirley Ann Field switching on the lights,

an acre of glass icicle in flames.
We went on past new services, new names,
and at the bottom end where Chaplin played
glimpsed his clog-dancing seven year-old shade
stood fidgeting, unable to keep still
on Horseshoe Street, while halfway down the hill
an angel and a monk, stone cross in hand,
debated the true centre of the land

near the dual carriageway and fast food shack
where vicious rape kicked off a few years back.
We crossed Horsemarket with the lights to check
on Marcfair's dwindling Roundhead bottleneck
and found a dried-up urban streambed where
were saint-bones, Saxon royalty at prayer
or Cromwell dreaming in his lively bed
of countries with no king, kings with no head,



his body torn from its Westminster tomb.
Next time he'll call the ibis; book a room.
We paused at Freeschool Street and I recalled
Dominic Allard's house, its wood-yard sprawled
below the loft from which we'd squint at Mars
through telescopes or bottle trembling stars
above the gasworks, fireflies of the heart.
I talked about his father's horse and cart

that bore Jim Allard on the hectic lanes
with him unconscious, snoring at the reins,
down Horsemarket; ignored the red light's glare
to trudge through swerving cars along Marefair
and Freeschool Street into the yard where Jim
would wake, go in, have his wife read to him
from that night's paper. Jim's tired eyes were blamed.
Illiteracy, back then, folk were ashamed

though Calluz said that in this part of town
reading and writing skills were still way down
and when pressed for a case in point she told
how Sharon left school pregnant, twelve years old,
baby at thirteen, benefits to claim,
a flat...she couldn't even write her name
or read a summons. Aged just fifteen she
sat while the Child Protection Agency

expressed their disapproval and dismay.
When she was twelve, though, where the fuck were they?
Across from Freeschool Street's tectonic fault
Anthony Jelly's cab purred to a halt
as we stood talking. Winding down the glass
he mentioned Dominic, in the same class
as us at Spring Lane School (and likewise life)
now living down the yard from his ex-wife,

contented in his gypsy caravan,
immune to footage from Afghanistan
and all the clamours of the present day.
I thanked Ant for the news. He drove away,
left us to cross this road that snubbed the car
with pink macadam like a closing scar.
We went on to St. Peter's on our own,
an afternoon light buttering its stone

thick with a thousand years of sun and showers
while out the front Patricia tended flowers,
hues splashed on beautiful obsidian skin
when she pulled off her gloves and asked us in
to meet the new director and explain
what dragged me back to this childhood terrain,
this font where I took my baptismal dive:
a piece I planned to write for issue five

accompanying Mitch Jenkins' photo-spread
of an Olympian slum inhabited
by titans of scale all but disappeared
since first the clearance area was cleared.
Patricia, entertained by this conceit,
once more evoked the bard of Freeschool Street
Dominic Allard, the poetic soul
of this Eden, this godforsaken hole

where every weathered brick still knew his name,
a warmer, dearer category of fame.

We stood and chatted there on the same ground
wherein the bones of Ragener were found
with miracle-light bursting through the floor
then nosed around that cool interior;
were shown the saint's ninth century tombstone which
had been hauled out of a Victorian ditch

and now abided here in company with
a plaque commemorating William Smith
the father of English geology
who'd found a route took in antiquity
from Bath to Lincoln, a great limestone ridge
that crossed the River Nene down at West Bridge.
An obvious point of trade and port of call,
the reason why Northampton's here at all

is Smith's Jurassic Way where, it is claimed,
he died in Marefair on the track he'd named
and thus there is accrued, across the years
a coral growth of lost names and ideas
where plankton dreams have lodged and petrified.
Into the present's glare we stepped outside,
past a war monument near the west wall
with 'Jack Moore' etched into its pedestal

and no-one living who recalls the loss,
the name smoothed by erosion, smudged by moss.
Saxon grotesques glowered down to contemplate
the gargoyle slipping out by a rear gate
onto the green. We strolled down to attend
the absent terrace at its lower end
where my Nan lived and I, describing her,
explained to Calluz what deathmongers were,

a term unheard beyond this neighbourhood
referring to the female giants who stood
with folded arms at either end of life
for want of undertaker or midwife
prepared to work in areas like these
that had no cash, but plenty of disease.
Back then you'd give the deathmonger a shout
if there was ushering in or laying out

or any mortal business to be done.
They took care of it all. My Nan was one,
feared and respected everywhere she went,
anthracite eyes devoid of sentiment.
Even George Blackheart, gangster of these parts,
who leased out half the houses, all the tarts,
made sure to keep her on his 'friendly' list.
I figure she was his abortionist,

a role for which she'd be uniquely skilled,
and not his friend: that cunt had people killed.
Back in Marefair we got the chance to praise
Leanne, the pregnant girlfriend of Saint Craze,
one of the district kings of lyric spit.
Language, down here, it's your survival kit,
your only hope, your passport to real life,
your vehicle, your medicine, your knife.

We sent love and continued on our way
up Chalk Lane. There, in an arterial spray,
poppies erupted out between old stones
walling the burial ground where pauper bones
slept under business premises. Our route
took us past Frankie's. At the photo-shoot
some weeks before we'd been inside whereat
we'd watched the rudeboy slouch or tilt his hat

and we, soothed by his style, his stereo,
danced to The Yardbirds, ten years time ago.
We went up past the church, the meeting hall
with that wraith-gate halfway up its west wall
where Phillip Doddridge had refused to shun
the Baptist or the Swedenborgian
and jammed ajar the Church of England's door.
His daughter's buried underneath the floor

*"and we, soothed by
his style, his stereo,
danced to The Yardbirds,
ten years time ago..."*





,s

near Katherine's House, stood waiting to become
a tall, escape-proof crematorium
from which defenestrated women drop
right next to where the Great Fire set up shop.
Past there, the dance-school and then nursery
was now a Christ Disciples Ministry
whose Heaven must have seemed a likelier chance
than minded kids or learning how to dance

for residents hopeful of getting out.
Uphill The Golden Lion stood, just about,
wherein Mitch and his crew sliced light and time
to peel the moment, capture the sublime
in Warren, about whom reports were rife,
bouncer and porn star, it's a hard cock life,
poised like an escaped statue in the bar;
Dougie insisting we're all who we are,

eyes closed, head tipped back in his favourite chair,
hands turned to feeding swallows in the air
above the dead men; Brian, seventeen,
dressed smart, shoes polished, shirt and record clean
and studying hard in his attempts to be
an arrow for the coming century
fired at the future, into better days;
Charlie and George as re-imagined Krays

though each in truth is a far nobler man:
George murders greenfly, Charlie guns his van
but loves Claire, captured on her balcony
stone gorgeous while her lovely mum sips tea,
all that's magnificent in womankind –
a good right hook, pure heart, and filthy mind;
Marion, whom I'd not met but heard tell
was friends with Nathan, Aaron and Djamel,

the Kissoon boys, called in to demonstrate
what wildflowers streets like these can generate;
Phil Barton, making his principled stand
with a pet ferret, axe in his right hand
to represent the billhook then in care
as Police evidence at Campbell Square,
a local hero come to take his bow.
The Golden Lion had boarded windows now,

in a few weeks had been condemned to death.
Our shoot was its last gasp, but what a breath
it was, its fragrance lingering in the air.
We carried on along to Bath Street where
across the way a local tavern stood.
Calluz and Mitch, checking the neighbourhood
for talent had called in and stumbled on
a huge wife-beating ASBO marathon







where. Mi
received a
their Gove
back when
for the be
they'd run
Carrying
found An

Just one
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on yellow
into fruit
a (rallye, a
dismantle
and no-o

where Mitch, slagged off for vague sartorial crimes received a phone-call from The Sunday Times, their Gordon Brown shoot scheduled for next day back when things still might have turned out okay for the beleaguered Premier, on whose part they'd rung his land's bruised, angel-decreed heart. Carrying on down Scarletwell Street we found Andrew's Road, where my house used to be.

Just one home stands there now and would appear to be the last such building left down here, down from the former haunt of Bad King John on yellowed turf. Everything else had gone into frail memory, swallowed by the grass: a cradle, a community, a class dismantled halfway through its labouring and no-one said or did a fucking thing.

We stood there under sparsely-planted trees that had replaced a dozen families. The first few pittering spots became a trend. Rained off, the poem reached a natural end but not the place, its restless energy there in the sweet young vandal next to me; there in the ghosts that seethed up from that dirt, deathmongers, poets, whores, the odd blackshirt.


Doddridge and Cromwell railing at the Pope or Henry George, his bike-tyres made from rope, a branded slave come here from Tennessee to join these saints, these scum, this jubilee that might, where Thomas Becket came to trial be lost beneath a spurious 'cultural mile' or left to languish in the strangling weeds.

Heroic couplets: that's what this place needs.

DOUGIE INSISTING WE'RE ALL WHO WE ARE



*Photography by MITCH JENKINS Art Direction & Design by PAUL CHESSELL Retouching by PAUL NORMAN @ INVISIBLE INC.
Photographic Assistants: STEVE HARDMAN & LEO WILLIAMS
Hair & Make-Up: JO BULL*



'The Wastepaper Basket of My Mind' Part 1

By Robin Ince

Every year, I write one, two or three shows for the Edinburgh Fringe festival, though now I do the fringe fringe festival. The Edinburgh Fringe festival hasn't really been a fringe for a long time. While performers can lose over ten thousand pounds, ticket prices have more than doubled. So what should be the two most important elements of festival, performers and those who watch them, are the ones who get most fucked over. This year, one of the major fringe venues is playing host to well-known eavesdropper on the dead, Joe Power. Joe Power is a psychic and therefore a constant reminder that whatever scientific progress appears to be made, the brains inside our skulls are a sub-standard, tatty creation of evolution. Sadly, none of the major venues yet have any psychic surgeons persuading cancer patients their tumour was removed via slight of hand and secreted offal.

To avoid all this I now put two out of three shows on PBH's Free Fringe. Here, rather than a ticketing system, there is merely a bucket at the exit to take whatever change or notes the audience want to give. Strangely, I have found more dignity in holding a bucket than swanning around the media bars with powder nose paranoids hungrily searching for TV executives to lick and fondle. (I should point out that I am not secreting PR for my Edinburgh shows in the pages of *Dodgem Logic*, the shows will have come and gone by the time this issue lands on your comic shop counter). I have found the Edinburgh Fringe festival a difficult month. I have been locked in a toilet cubicle while one of my fellow performers attempted to kick the door down so he could devour me like a hairy tattooed shark consuming a short-sighted seal. The next day I woke up to discover my back had bruises that recreated the features of the toilet cistern I'd been thrown against, like a Turin shroud of cottaging violence. The next year I broke my arm while crossing the road with Howard Read. I challenge you to see Howard Read and me walking down the street without immediately thinking about *Of Mice and Men*. I discovered you can't perform stand up in a sling. The audience keep expecting a revelation where you throw the sling off and unicycle. To avoid the sling, I saved up my daily painkillers and then took them ten minutes before going on. This eventually led to some mental confusion. My first solo show, *The Award Winning Robin Ince, Star of the Office, Series 1, episode 5 (first bit)* was a carelessly conceived piece in which I played the part of me, but a more psychotic, deluded version of me who believed he was responsible for anything that had ever been good on TV or radio. While putting the show together I had amused myself by thinking that just maybe 5% of the audience might believe it was all real. Unfortunately, it turned out to be closer to 80%. Even when I was relentlessly punching the unripe melon that represented Vernon Kay's husband, people looked on as if observing a one night only nervous collapse, and once I started singing Mustan Sally...



(Oh, I've just remembered, though I can't plug the Edinburgh show, I will be doing a tour in Autumn, maybe I'm coming to YOUR town).

Now, by playing the fringe fringe I have found some sanity. I am only a little odd about seven minutes before the shows and even then, only as odd as I normally am seven minutes before anything.

That opening paragraph was longer than I thought it would be, and there seem to be more of them.

Every year I spend months trying out new material in clubs and with work in progress shows. Some ideas work immediately, some take time to work out how it can be funny, some just never seem to get more than one go. There are some ideas that I return to every year and they just never make the grade, but I will not leave them, I must flay their corpse in public at least once a year, still hopeful that, despite the decay, it will suddenly flinch into life.

Here are a few ideas that still haven't made it, maybe next year, or this year if I'm drunk.

1. While scratching my head on a bus replacement service from Newcastle to York, I realised the immensity of my dandruff problem (do not use the harsh shampoo of cheap motels, I was lucky to leave the shower cubicle with my sight). I thought a positive way of looking at it was that I would be leaving a trail of my dusty skin wherever I walked. Rather than see dandruff as a problem I thought it was worth seeing it as an increased chance that future geneticists would find my dead cells scattered everywhere and replicate me. Then I realised that people with psoriasis leave more skin behind, so I'd probably remain un-replicated while a million Dennis Potters took over the world grumpily and then killed it off with plumes of passive smoke. (Attempted once at York's City Screen comedy club, and then forgotten.)

2. Evolution's big mistake was to make sex too easy. In olden times people needed lots of babies because most of them died. Now, through improved medicine, we don't need so many. Lots of idiots are having children and, through nature or nurture, they are creating idiot progeny. My idea was to make sex less sexually interesting. By bombarding the world with porn, I imagined we could somehow make sex banal and dull. Then, we make open university lecture programmes arousing. You're watching a programme about wave particle duality and, by the addition of a hushed delivery and some French lounge music, people are aroused, then the clever babies appear. I think this idea ended with someone becoming confused while watching a lecture about Schrödinger having sex with a cat which they didn't know was dead or alive. Worked once, then faded out.

3. Something about ending the parochial wars on earth by fabricating an alien threat – turned out *Outer Limits* had done that one already.

4. The chattering classes – how has this become an insult for the liberal intelligentsia, as if they are the only ones who chatter while other demographic groups are silent and enigmatic. Occasionally I have mumbled something akin to that in subterranean clubs, but I lack conviction.

5. Liberal intelligentsia – how is that something to be ashamed of? People who attempt to educate themselves and believe in people's rights, as if to be a proudly ignorant fascist is superior. Probably appeared too po-faced when I tried this one out.

6. For years I have tried to write something about Eratosthenes, the man who worked out the circumference of the world with a stick, some string and a well. It wasn't a very deep well, if it was a well that went to the centre of the earth it would have been easy as Eratosthenes would have the radius so the maths would be easy. He made his servant pace out the distance from Alexandria to Syene, so the routine relied on a poor put-upon-servant losing count or constantly being asked by his master to measure ludicrous things like the height of the sky. Doesn't seem as catchy as it did when I first attempted something similar five years ago.

7. Something about why the burkha and glittery thongs are ultimately the same in a culture's oppression of women and the illusion of choice. Could accidentally teeter into an interpretation that suggests misogyny, that's that one out.

8. I once believed that the decline of thinking could be linked to the rise of drawstring trousers, zips and slip-on shoes. In Victorian times shoes were problematic to lace and trousers' systems of metal fasteners meant that before you had even left the house, your brain had to become engaged by the mere act of dressing. By the time you were at your work bench, you were ready to work out things. With ease of dressing comes lazy or no thinking. Audiences did not agree.

9. Something about Herbert Lom, can't read the rest of my writing.

10. In a similar vein, had the mobile phone been in general use in the 1850s, Darwin would not have come up with the theory of evolution. Every time he went off to ponder and walk around his thinking path his phone would have gone off with an invitation by Thomas Huxley to a cheese and fossil party or the irate librarian at the aviary lending library telling him that his finches were overdue. Logically flawed, he could have just put it on silent or left it in the house.

11. Jean Charcot was a pioneer in the theory of hysteria. For his demonstrations in Paris he would put the most hysterical women in front of an audience and declare, "Look at this loonish behaviour". Apparently this led to women looning it up around him in the hope of being picked as the centrepiece of a lecture. I felt this 19th century *Britain's Got Talent* had some mileage; maybe I just never performed the part of hysterical women with enoughchutzpah. Even though women were considered to be the only sufferers of hysteria (a womb being considered pre-requisite for the condition at the time), Charcot believed that men with flabby testicles could also suffer. I think what might have made the men hysterical was a man checking how flabby their testicles were.

12. Some creationists answer the problem of their being dinosaur fossils by saying they were put there by God to test our faith. This made me see God less as omnipotent and more as a drunken, paranoid husband shouting at his wife in the Lamb and Flag – "admit it, you'd rather fuck Tim wouldn't you, don't leave me, I've changed", though God's language may be closer to "you love Buddha don't you, I've seen the way you look at those texts."

13. Something about banana republics.

14. How unfair the oath "I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth". It seems to initially offer hope for the lying criminal "oh yes, I'll tell the truth, and some lies tsk tsk, oh ok, I'll tell the whole truth, but maybe with a bit of a twist, NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH, why didn't you bloody say that at the beginning grrrrrrrrrr etc."

15. How 24-hour television has replaced the entertainment of the occasional visit from a dancing bear and why that might be a bad thing, even if it provides better lives for bears.

16. I tried to do something about the absurdism of UN deciding whether to call the atrocities of Rwanda genocide or merely an act of genocide. These decisions were being made as the slaughter continued and stymied much needed aid. I decided you needed a damn good joke to tackle this sort of scurrilous bureaucracy. I couldn't find that joke, so that was the end of that lecture.

17. Hypatia - the last librarian of the great library of Alexandria. Still seeking an angle – she was flayed to death by St Cyril (just plain Cyril in those days)

18. Sponsored walks, swims or parachute jumps – why can't your friends just give you money for charity, why do they insist you end up vomiting by the shallow end of a municipal pool or dying with your legs rammed inside your torso after a parachute fuck up?

I thought I would be able to cover most of my misfired ideas but have been horrified to discover just how many pointless ideas I have had. There is notebook after notebook that has no chance of being published by Faber and Faber after my death. And why have I never learnt that if I just wrote three words I'll remember my intentions a week later? I am sure 'reality cave theatre' meant something on midnight 04 to Northampton, but now...





GENET - SHORT BAD & BEAUTIFUL

by Reverend D. Wayne Love

When did you last read a good book? I'm not talking about graphic novels, comics, or the last book you were forced to read at school. A book which shook you to the bones. A book whose subject matter you found repugnant, but for some reason you couldn't put it down. A glorification of murderers, thieves, pederasts, rapists... the poetry of depravity.

Welcome to the world of Jean Genet, one of the greatest writers of the 20th century. As Celine said 'there are only 2 writers alive worth reading, Genet and me'. Celine was nuts, but he was brilliant. And in France these days, Celine and Genet are the most discussed writers of the 20th century, along with the preening poseur Marcel Proust...

A thief is in prison. He's writing on torn-up paper bags. He writes about 50 pages. He's summoned to the Law Courts for a hearing and leaves his papers in his cell. While at court, a screw finds the paper bags and rips them up. Back in his cell, the man finds the papers are gone. Next day he's

called to the Governor's office and given 6 days of dry bread as punishment. After the 6 days are up, he goes to the supply room and orders a notebook, which was within his rights. At night he hides under the covers of his bed, remembering the sentences he wrote and starts all over again. The year is 1941. The scribbles become one of the most iconoclastic novels of the 20th century: '*Our Lady of the Flowers*'. And the writer is Genet.

Genet was born illegitimate in Paris in 1910. He never knew his parents. He became a ward of the State, and was eventually shipped out to the countryside to the district of Morvan, where he was taken in by a local family. They were paid a nominal monthly fee towards his upkeep.

As a child he was a dreamer. Chores finished for the day, he buggered off to the outhouse to read. He later looked back on this as a formative experience - an epiphany. The smells, the sensations experienced in the outhouse were a pre-sentiment of the rank fetid squalor of the prison cells he was later to metamorphosise into another, more potent, dream world.

He knew he was different from the other kids. He knew he was homosexual before he knew what it was. He also knew he was special. He devoured literature. Later, people said that he read every book in the school library.

Trying to be somebody by owning things is nothing new. At 10, as a choirboy, Genet was caught in the act of his first crime. Pencils, books and sweets. In the village registry, among other names, were those of Querrelle and Cullafoy. These names were to be found amongst the characters of Genet's future novels and plays.

Genet became locked into a fetishised cycle of petty crime, detention and punishment. This behavioural trait is pivotal in understanding the work of Genet. He even said "I believe that my criminal record contains 14 convictions for theft. Which amounts to saying that I was a bad thief, since I was always getting caught." Bad thief. I quite like that. He gets nicked for things like stealing bottles of wine when he's drunk. Stealing hankies, paperbacks... My personal favourite is the story of Genet being chased down the road by a tailor from whom he'd stolen a bolt of cloth. Down by Notre Dame, he ran into an old book seller he had also stolen from. The old man grabbed him, held him 'til the tailor arrived, and the two oldies handed this fit young tealeaf over to the gendarmes. That's part of the charm of Genet. He was able to make the pettiness of his crimes and the ruggedness of his associates into something quite marvellous. To me, this is what great writing's all about. The ability to transform the mundane into the fabulous. No writer does this better than Genet. Apart from Celine. But that's another story. No less fantastic, and which - if you're good - I might tell you another time.

This nicking might sound absurd but they were desperate straits for Genet. Making him a ten time loser and liable to life imprisonment. While awaiting sentence, Genet wrote the poem 'The Man Condemned to Death'. And had it published privately. How he afforded this doesn't matter. It was read by certain denizens of the French literary scene, including Jean Cocteau. In prison, he finished 'Our Lady of the Flowers'. Cocteau, at first shocked by its raw, visceral portrayal of homosexuality and prison life, on second reading realised that this was a debut as important as Rimbaud, and determined to find it a publisher... he and other French cultural notables began to petition for Genet's release. It was touch and go for a while, but eventually Genet was pardoned by the French President himself in 1949.

Edmund White - the foremost biographer of Genet in English, has said that in works like 'Our Lady of the Flowers' (1944) and 'The Thief's Journal' (1948), Jean Genet was the breakthrough author who had brought explicit scenes of homosexual activity into the living rooms of middle-class society the world over.

Genet always liked to fuck with people's heads. As is the case with many people raised by the state and its institutions, he developed a sense of himself as the champion of the outsider (but not in the sense of Albert Camus or Jean Paul Sartre). For instance, the first paragraph of 'Our Lady of the Flowers' is given over to the veneration of one Maurice Weidemann. The notorious French gangster and hard man, his picture on the front cover of a national paper - head bandaged after a shoot-out with the cops - whom Genet's alter ego Divine verbally masturbates over.

This adulation of criminal types is something that runs through Genet's work. He is always fucking with polarities. His ability to martyr the shabbiest queens, the thickest hardnuts, fratricidal sailors, was an attempt at sanctification which I think betrayed something of the closet catholic in him; he used to say half jokingly that Joan of Arc was the only woman he was ever interested in. Once a choirboy....

Throughout the 50s, Genet mastered a new genre - the play. 'The Maids', 'The Balcony', 'The Screens', 'The Blacks', were all considered ground-breaking masterpieces in their time, and they were played and directed by the most acclaimed artists in the greatest theatres in France. Roger Blin, genius of the 50s *avant garde* French theatre, who introduced Samuel Beckett and Eugene Ionesco, worked side by side with Genet in many major productions. Some of these plays caused riots in the theatre, the likes of which hadn't been seen since the days of Alfred Jarry, creator of the great 'Ubu Roi'.

But Genet was a mass of contradictions - and quite probably a manic depressive - churning out huge bodies of work over short periods of time, followed by periods of deep indolence and despair. His love life being an obvious catalyst for his work, he loved passionately one day and was unapproachable the next. The great love of his life, a young trapeze artist called Abdullah Bentaga, committed suicide. Genet fell into the abyss and travelled extensively - in my opinion - trying to flee from the demons. But like any great writer, Genet knew the only way to fight the demons was to write them off.

In the 60s, Genet is published in the States for the first time. But he is denied an entry Visa on account of his sexual deviancy. Inspired by the events of May '68, but having no illusions as to the outcome of the demonstrations, he takes part in the debates in the Sorbonne but doesn't speak. He later said "I was in the theatre that was occupied by the students in May 1968. It wasn't just any theatre, it was the one where 'The Screens' had been staged. If they had been real revolutionaries, they wouldn't have occupied a theatre. Especially not the National. They would have occupied law courts, prison, radio. They would have acted like revolutionaries the way Lenin did. They didn't do that. So what happened.... On the stage there were young people holding placards and giving speeches. These speeches came from the stage into the hall and then came back to the stage... A circular movement of revolutionary speeches that went on and on, but never outside the theatre."

Even though banned from America, Genet managed to get into the country ostensibly to cover the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago, for Esquire magazine. There he met Alan Ginsberg and William Burroughs. A riot kicked off. Genet, being an old shrewdly, got out of the way of the fracas, promptly knocked a door at random, and explaining that he was just a French tourist caught in the stramash, he asked the occupant if he could come in out of the trouble. "I'm Jean Genet", he told the man "How do you do" "I don't believe it!" the guy said, "I'm in the middle of my dissertation for my degree. You are my subject. "Another story goes, when asked by the then editor of Esquire, where is the piece, Genet replied "You get the piece when I get my money". "But I've already paid you in full Mr Genet". "No you have not", Genet replied. "You old thief..." The editor squawked. Mais oui, bien sur, yep. That's my kind of fucking writer!

There are millions of other things I could tell you about him. Best thing you can do is get hold of the work. Plays, texts, novels... Everything he wrote has now been published in some form of another. Google him. Check out the only film he directed, 'A Song of Love', on Youtube. Edmund White's monumental biography is a good start. Check him out... if you're straight, you'll never think of buggery in the same way again...

Lord Cornhole.

aka... D. Wayne Love. 1st minister of the 1st presbyterian church of Elvis the divine....

Illustration by Melinda Gebbie & Coloured by Hoax



The Perfect Storm

If the publishers of Hank Janson and other one-and-sixpenny dreadfuls hadn't been jailed, Britain might still have a ban on *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and other erotic classics.

Steve Holland charts their rise, fall and legacy...

Crudely printed, with pages roughly stapled together and wrapped in gaudy covers, the paperbacks of the post-war decade were unlike anything ever seen by the British publishing industry. The Second World War had created what might be considered a 'perfect storm' of elements that came together at a time when reading material was difficult to get hold of. Paper rationing and teams of authors unable to find work elsewhere combined with a market for hard-hitting American-style thrillers and seedy romances; the middle-men were a new breed of publishers who negotiated the grey market for paper supplies, distributing their wares to newsagents and booksellers across the country. "They could quite easily have been mass producing stockings of doubtful quality for the barrow trade," recalls one of the authors who turned out a handful of hardboiled yarns for the princely rate of £1 a thousand words, all rights.

Cheap paperbacks by popular authors were nothing new. The inter-war years had seen many publishers issuing sixpenny paperbacks which vied with magazines, story papers and newspapers on newsagents' shelves, all of which carried fiction. Bright covers designed to make a novel stand out also condemned them to be dismissed as literature for the lower classes and, just like story papers, they suffered during the 1920s and 1930s from the rise of cheaper forms of entertainment—radio, the cinema and the wider spread of lending libraries—and struggled during the depression.

The paperback was the realm of the romance, the thriller and the western, *genre* fiction that found a steady audience amongst those hungry for excitement when there were no new Edgar Wallace or Annie S. Swan novels to be borrowed.



There was also an undercurrent of a more salacious kind of novel that could not be found in Boots' and Smiths' tuppenny libraries, often featuring young English girls caught up in a whirlwind of passion and disguised as exposés of white slave trafficking and prostitution in Europe's capitals. The books themselves were no more indecent than many of the romance novels available in the lending libraries, but the settings and situations were suggestive and sensational—enough to earn the chief exponents of this kind of literature, Arthur Gray and Frederick M. Mowl, jail sentences for publishing obscene books in 1931. Two decades later, the new paperback industry would find itself facing precisely the same moral backlash.

Legitimised by the arrival of Penguin Books in 1936 and publisher Allan Lane's quest to bring literature to the masses for the price of ten cigarettes, many publishers rushed out their own paperback lines, bringing their most popular library authors to the forefront of newsagents' spinning racks.

In September 1939, Britain went to war and paper rationing, introduced a few months later, devastated the British book industry, as did the Luftwaffe who fire-bombed Paternoster Row, damaging the premises of 18 publishing houses and destroying 5 million books in December 1940. The 1942 Lend Lease agreement between Britain and the US, which allowed the Allies to draw on American resources, turned out to be a double-edged sword but meant that importing American paperbacks was uneconomical until restrictions were lifted in the late 1950s.

Add to these factors a highly mobile population, many of them seeking escape in light entertainment from the horrors they were facing, and the influx of American Troops into the UK from 1942 onwards.

PERSONAL CONFESSIONS



In them, the paperback market found an audience more than happy to part with their shillings for tough, uncompromising thrillers by the likes of Peter Cheyney and James Hadley Chase. Chase's *No Orchids for Miss Blandish* became a best-seller, clocking up half-a-million sales in only a few years.

The perfect storm was gathering on the horizon and about to unleash its full fury.

The taste for these cheap paperbacks tempted book-sellers and distributors, unable to obtain books from other sources, into publishing. If you could get hold of paper—whether it was off-cuts of newsprint or paper intended to wrap margarine—and an author willing to write for £1 a thou, it was, at first, almost impossible for the entrepreneurial publisher not to make money.

A new style of pulp was born: cheaply produced, a "complete book length story" could run to as few as 16 pages. The issuing of new periodicals was banned early in the war, so magazines were given a new title each issue, some sneakily linked ("2nd selection", "3rd selection"); the popular children's annual had to be rebranded as albums to avoid the hint of periodicity. The official ration of paper available to publishers who wanted to put out a periodical was eight hundredweight every four months, as long as the paper was available. In real terms, this meant that new launches were virtually impossible, although a few brave publishers pinned their hopes on producing quarterly pocket magazines, little more than booklets spreading the quota of paper thinly across as many copies as possible.

During the immediate post-war years Norman Firth (usually writing as N. Wesley Firth) was Britain's Prince of Pulp Peddlers. Raised in Birkenhead, the 24-year-old Firth married in 1944 and began writing soon after, selling his first short stories to market-stall-bookseller-turned-publisher Gerald Swan. Firth had a fluid, adaptable style and was capable of grinding out 6,000 words at a sitting, the perfect writer for the new British pulps.

STRANGE OFFSPRING



AMERICAN FICTION No. 10
RAYMOND A. PALMER
 ONE SHILLING NET



Crime and western yarns flew from his typewriter; if his publishers needed children's stories or romances or science fiction that week, that was what Firth would write. His first slim collection of stories appeared in August 1945, and within a year there were very few publishers who hadn't published one or more of Firth's short stories or short novels. Gerald Swan, Mitre Press, Bear Hudson, Bernards, Grant Hughes, Hamilton & Co., Curtis Warren, Scion, Brown Watson, Paget Publications... Firth was keeping them all well supplied.

His chief facility was his ability to absorb the elements of any popular series and regurgitate it. His most regular character was the hard-hitting Merrick Lawrence, a Race Williams-esque professional killer with morals (he only killed bad guys who deserved it); another character, Talbot Sinner had more than a touch of *The Saint* about him (the name being something of a giveaway); his children's stories were written in the style of Charles Hamilton and always included a tubby Billy Bunter-esque character. Strictly speaking, Firth was not creating anything new but he was recognising a formula that worked and would work again when transplanted to new characters. What he added to the formula—and what was usually missing from the work of most of his contemporaries—was a sense of humour which made Firth's stories far more fun to read than most of the hackwork turned out at the time.

Firth was the chief author behind Benson Herbert's Utopian Press. The early war years had seen a more open-minded attitude to pin-ups: the exquisite paintings of artist David Wright from the pages of *Sketch and Men Only* covered barrack-room walls throughout the war; swimsuit pin-ups appeared widely in magazines and nude studies were a popular feature of pocket magazines *Men Only* and *Lilliput*. Whilst accepted as a morale-booster for the troops, when publisher Benson Herbert began adorning the covers of novelettes reprinted from American SF pulp magazines with nudes, he quickly found the market was for photographs rather than fiction.

Under the Utopian banner he published a series of saucy monthly magazines with increasingly bizarre titles *Cowgirl Capers*, *Hula Hotcha*, *Hayride Antics*, *Hubba Hubba*, *Heebee Jeebee*—in order to promote sales of photographic 'sets' and film strips. The stories, written by Firth, were light-hearted and barely titillating. The covers, on the other hand, were highly stylised delights by Reina Bull, whose sultry, pouting cover girls found lacy underwear, stockings and garters the perfect clothing for all occasions.

Firth, at one point living in the basement at Herbert's Roland Gardens home, developed tuberculosis; returning to Birkenhead, he died at the age of 29, never realising the potential of his brief career. His last book, published posthumously, was his first hard-cover to be published outside the confining walls of the pulp publishers and might have marked the beginning of a whole new career.

Firth was an example of a newcomer who discovered the new pulp markets could pay—and pay well—if you could be prolific. Better paying publishers may have been struggling, but authors willing to become the post-WW2 equivalent of the Victorian penny-a-liners could make a reasonable living. Firth averaged three times the working man's weekly wage from his writing, other authors were earning as much, sometimes more. Michael Hervey claimed to have had 600 short stories and 50 books published in his first six years as a writer despite the wartime recession. John Russell Fearn, whose career had begun in the American pulps, was commissioned to write two books a month by paperback publisher Scion Ltd. and still found time to write novels for the Canadian *Toronto Star Weekly*—topping even John Jennison, who had 30 novels published in 1952 alone.

Another prolific writer was the mysterious Quinn, Christian name unknown, who reputedly lived in the cellars beneath the Scion offices in Kensington High Street, who was paid £7 10s. a week to churn out gangster thrillers as Hans Lugar—minus £2.10s. rent for his room, furnished with an old iron bed, a desk and a typewriter.

A paperback novel, by the early 1950s, averaged 36-40,000 words and, for a one-off payment of between £25 and £40, authors were expected to sell all rights. Editorial control over the books was usually minimal: some publishers liked to have an explanation of the cover within the text, although the covers were bought in separately from agencies, which led to some unconvincing and hurried insertions from the authors: an over length novel could be trimmed by simply removing a couple of thousand words from the middle of the story; books appeared under the names of other writers; and with little knowledge of the fields they were publishing in, they were unaware when authors submitted novels that were heavily influenced by—or even straight rip-offs—of novels by the likes of Raymond Chandler, W. R. Burnett or Mickey Spillane.

PHANTOM DETECTIVE CASES

1/-



The publishers who grew up after the war were literary barrow boys, spotting a gap in the market and filling it with whatever manuscripts came to hand. Many of the early publishers that grew up around Shepherd's Bush had family connections. Bernard Babani, the son of a Turkish Jewish immigrant, had worked in the radio and engineering industry before setting up Bernard Babani Publishing and Bernards (Publishers) Ltd. to publish technical books. His co-director was his brother-in-law Abraham Assael who also founded Bear Hudson. Bernard's younger brother, Abraham Babani founded Brown Watson, the name chosen because it "sounded the kind of name a publishing house ought to have". Abraham Assael's younger brother Harry co-founded Hamilton & Co. with Joseph Pacey, who set up an offshoot company, Grant Hughes, with his wife and a second company, Curtis Warren, with editor Edwin Self, who subsequently left to found his own company. Samuel, the youngest of the three Assael brothers, was behind the John Spencer imprint. Between them, they published over 1,800 books in the decade between 1945 and 1955, around 16 new titles a month—a figure made all the more astonishing when you remember that paper restrictions were in place for half that period.

Although they were churned out like so many sausages on a production line, a handful of employees—publishers, editors and authors—were not so cynical in exploiting the market. Some of the writers were capable of putting a hard-hitting, fast-moving story together; and editors like Gordon Landsborough at Hamiltons and Maurice Read at Scion wielded their blue pencils and brought out the best in the talent pool available to them.

By the time paper restrictions were partly lifted in 1950, a great many publishers had established themselves in London and the provinces. Scion Ltd., Modern Fiction, R & L Locker, Pembertons and World Distributors were the biggest names in the field, which also included dozens of other smaller outfits like Martin & Reid, Popular Fiction, Tempest Publishing and Paget Publications who emerged during the days of paper rationing to publish everything from the children's tracing book *Bimbo Goes to the Moon* to *Hot Dames on Cold Slabs*.

The gangster novel was the bedrock of the cheap paperback market. Wartime sales of books by James Hadley Chase and Peter Cheyney were phenomenal: Cheyney published audited figures showing that his books had sold 1½ million copies in 1943, a figure which leapt to 2½ million in 1945. On the advice of a distributor, Stephen Frances of Pendulum Publications had written a 15,000 word gangster story over a weekend to make best use of some paper that had come his way. The narrator needed a name, and Hank was chosen because it rhymed with Yank and Janson because it carried on the 'yank' sound, although very few readers realised and pronounced Janson with a hard 'J'.

Hank Janson became the most famous of Britain's paperback gangster writers. After the struggles he had faced with Pendulum, Frances had set himself up as a one-man publishing house, writing and publishing his own novels. With only enough money to print a few thousand, he was able to strike an exclusive deal with Julius Reiter of Gaywood Distributors, who took the whole print-run. When the books proved successful, Reiter loaned Frances money to increase the print-run from 10,000 to 15,000, then to 20,000 copies of each new title.

Janson was not the only new gangster writer on the market. In 1946, the same year as Hank debuted with *When Dames Get Tough*, Frank Dubrez Fawcett produced *Miss Otis Comes to Piccadilly* under the pen-name Ben Sarto, the first of over 100 Sarto novels that would appear over the next 12 years. With a print-run of 50,000 copies a book, Sarto's publisher, Modern Fiction, launched a second by-line, 'Griff', who was soon selling 40,000 copies of each new novel. For a while, the market could not get enough: Hamilton & Co. launched the careers of Jeff Bogar, Bart Carson and Bruno Schwarz. Curtis Warren had Nick Baroni and Brett Vane and Scion Ltd. had Dail Ambler (one of the few female writers of American gangster novels), Al Bocca, Ricky Drayton, Duke Linton (a moonlighting Stephen Frances), Brad Shannon and Ross Angel. Other one-man bands sprang up, including Muir-Watson in Glasgow, with founder John Watson writing as Nat Karta; in Bolton, George Dawson created Nick Perrelli and Lew Della before hitting the jackpot with Michael Storme.

Ben Sarto's sales leapt with each new novel and before long his publishers were boasting of selling three million copies of his books. Fawcett was writing a book every fortnight, straight onto the typewriter without even a read-through, writing every day, even when on holiday—which was fine for quantity but the endless grind meant literary quality suffered.

FRIGHTENED VIRGIN



Stephen Frances, on the other hand, was only producing Hank Janson at the leisurely rate of one a month and had even found time to take a holiday driving through Spain. He immediately fell in love with the coastal village of Rosas and, discovering that new flats were being built, bought one. Back in England, a printer's agent named Reg Carter persuaded Frances that he should be concentrating on writing new Janson novels rather than worrying about production and printing. Frances sold Carter the Janson name and moved to Spain where he produced a new Janson novel every six weeks. Carter bought up a defunct company, rebranding it New Fiction Press, and a printing firm and within months—the new rotary press pumping out the latest Janson novels in editions of 100,000—sales passed 3 million.

Carter soon ran into a major problem. One of the main selling points of the Janson novels was the alluring cover artwork of Reg Heade, Born Reginald Cecil Webb in 1901, became an integral part of Janson's success, designing the Hank Janson logo and producing a steady stream of beautifully painted and increasingly lascivious cover images. The typical Heade cover was a snapshot of a wide-eyed, attractive young woman caught at the moment of realisation that something terrifying is about to happen. His artwork is probably the only reason many collectors are aware of the gangster paperback boom, with many scarce titles now selling for hundreds of dollars.

Their scarcity is in part due to the covers themselves. Authorities that had turned a blind eye to morale-boosting pin-ups and nudity were now intent on cleaning up morals. A handful of prosecutions against booksellers in 1948-49 soared in 1950 and destruction orders were issued by magistrates against 40,400 copies of books and magazines. A growing number of Watch Committees brought magazines to the attention of Police Commissioners, often sunbathing or pin-up magazines or fiction magazines with lurid titles, and newsagents found themselves raided and their shops stripped of anything that might conceivably be obscene. The sexy covers and racy titles of gangster novels and their 'sophisticated' siblings—similar in tone to the suggestive paperback novels of the 1920s and often falsely claiming to be "translated from the French"—meant they too, were gathered up and removed by constables with no knowledge of their content.

The newsagents were then summonsed to appear before the local magistrate and asked to show why the books and magazines should not be destroyed. Most newsagents, weighing up the costs of a court case against a handful of books, usually chose not to contend the case and the magistrate would issue a destruction order.

In April 1951, the Home Office contacted Chief Constables to bring their attention to the number of 'indecent' books and magazines that were being destroyed and, not surprisingly, the number of proceedings rose from 67 in 1950 to 271 in 1951 and a thirteen fold increase in fines. The indiscriminate harvesting led to destruction orders against classics, both ancient (*The Decameron*) and modern (James M. Cain's *Double Indemnity*), the boys' story paper fanzine *Collector's Digest* and Arthur Mee's *The Children's Newspaper*.

Prosecutions against publishers began to increase, in one case the fines amounting to £1,350 for publishing three obscene libels ('libel' in this case derived from 'libellus', meaning 'a little book').



Hank Janson was a regular target; 1,368 individual destruction orders being issued against 51 titles between 1950-53. Reg Carter attempted to stave off the problem by overprinting the covers to hide the sensational Heade dames, although that was only a temporary measure; Heade continued to give the books glamorous cover images, but toned down their sexual overtones.

In January 1954, Reg Carter and Julius Reiter were brought before the Recorder of London, Gerald Dodson, at the Old Bailey and, after a four day trial during which the Jury devoted less than four hours to reading the seven novels being prosecuted, were found guilty and sentenced to six month imprisonment. The defendants appealed, the crux of their case being that the Recorder had made his own views—that the novels were examples of the degeneracy of modern times, “leaving you and your children a miserable inheritance”—too strongly; one of the defence lawyers had walked out in disgust halfway through Dodson’s summing up. The appeal was dismissed.

An arrest warrant was issued for ‘Hank’ and Stephen Frances returned from Spain to have his day in court, hoping to prove that his books had been unfairly labelled obscene. His case was dismissed without the question of their obscenity being addressed.

In the wake of the Janson trial, more prosecutions against paperback publishers followed, in one case involving 49 summonses against 12 defendants over the publication of 4 books. Some cases were dismissed, some were successful and some dismissed after appeals. The real shockwave to hit the publishing industry following the Janson trial was that five major publishers, whose books had been used by the defence to show current standards of acceptable literature, were prosecuted. Of the five one (Werner Laurie) was fined after pleading guilty, three (Arthur Barker, William Heinemann, Secker & Warburg) were acquitted and one (Hutchinson, the only case before the Recorder) found guilty.

Elsewhere, there was no consistency in the way the law was applied; a joke magazine, *A Basinful of Fun* was found not guilty on two occasions and, on another, the magistrate ordered 108,000 copies to be destroyed, saying “I have never seen in any publication anything so grossly low as two small pictures in this book”—one of them being the winner of the ‘Bikini Girl’ competition, which he described as “obscene”. In Hull, a magistrate opined, “the flamboyant nature of the covers was sufficient to indicate the nature of the reading matter, but that the court did not feel that those wishing to read such trash should be prevented by grandmotherly legislation from doing so”.

The uproar in literary and legal circles about prosecutions against respectable publishers led to the Society of Authors, led by Sir Alan Herbert, to draft a bill, which was introduced to Parliament by Roy Jenkins in 1955. After struggling through a Select Committee, who eventually reported three years later, the new Obscene Publications Act became law in 1959.

The first major case brought under the new Act was against the Penguin Books’ unexpurgated edition of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* in 1960. The book was found not guilty and the defence of literary merit enshrined in the Act has meant no novel has been found guilty—or no conviction upheld if appealed—of obscenity by a jury since.

The change in law came too late for the publishers convicted in the Hank Janson case. The paperback boom had already died: newsagents and booksellers found it safer to stock Penguin, Pan and Corgi books rather than Hank and his cronies. Sales were down to a few thousand copies per book and attempts to hop onto other bandwagons, like the growing interest in science fiction, fell flat when Crime and Western writers relocated their tough-guy heroes into space, smothering the real talent.

Rather than risk jail sentences, the publishers moved on, some into more legitimate paperback publishing (Ace Books, Panther Books, Digit Books, Badger Books and Consul Books all grew out of the post-war paperback boom). The final nail in the coffin came with the lifting of import sanctions on American books in the late 1950s, which allowed cheap American remainders to flood into the country. The post-war paperback era was over—but it had left an indelible mark on British publishing.



THE ECO CHAMBER



NO MAN'S AN ISLAND

By Dave Hamilton

Throughout human history we have seldom lived in isolation, instead favouring small, sociable groups, such as those found in tribal societies. It is only in recent years we have either chosen, or more to the point, been conned into living in tiny individual boxes and going about our daily business with only ourselves in mind. When anthropologists discover a new tribe in some far flung corner of the globe, it is unlikely they will observe individuals hunting or gathering alone before retreating into a semi-detached hut. They don't observe this behaviour for good reason, if these so called primitive societies acted as single-mindedly and selfishly as we do now they would all starve! Instead they act as a collective, with each individual member working to support the group rather than themselves. In parts of Britain not so long ago, families would work for the sake of the village or township. For example, one family would fish, while another grew oats or root crops and another farmed sheep for meat and wool. This way an individual could specialise and excel in their chosen field and provide for both themselves and the community as a whole. Surnames, such as Fisher, Hooper (barrel maker), Tailor and Shepherd (also ironically Thatcher) are testament to this. These co-dependent societal structures thrived especially in island societies. Often cut off from the mainland they had to be self-sufficient or risk starvation, it made sense to pool resources rather than go it alone.

In the South Pacific there are three coral atoll island groups, Atafu, Nukunonu and Fakaofo which collectively make up Tokelau, a Polynesian territory of New Zealand. Despite western influence and the introduction of a market economy, islanders still partake in what they call 'inati' where food is shared out equally in each atoll regardless of who caught, grew or produced it. This kind of altruism, giving without the need for a reward, stands apart from other systems such as bartering or cash based, market economies, typical of most of the western world. Gift economies such as this work a lot like a Grandmother - she may spend countless hours knitting a hat or a scarf, only wishing to receive a smile (real or forced) from her grandchild's face on Christmas morning.

In day to day terms, gift economies work on what sociologists call reciprocal altruism, the idea that one good deed deserves another. I often give away surplus home-grown food without wanting anything more in return, other than the knowledge the food didn't go to waste. Sometimes I find, perhaps as a result, I'm offered lifts or bought the odd beer. Despite this being an unspoken form of reciprocal altruism, I couldn't for a minute call up that person and bemoan that they had to give me a lift to the beach as I gave them a pumpkin, or stand at the bar and say "these are on you, I gave you a bunch of carrots".

America's crazy equivalent of our Glastonbury festival, Nevada's Burning Man festival, works on a similar ethos with no buying, no selling or advertising allowed and even cashless negotiations such as bartering discouraged. The festival now attracts over 48000 people; with many of those taking it upon themselves to give gifts to fellow festival-goers. Fury booted, face-painted freaks can be seen wandering through the festival site handing out fruit to perfect strangers. At night small torches/flashlights change hands to those wanting to relieve themselves under the dark desert sky. With no stalls or fly-pitches it has to work this way; at Glastonbury you forget your sunglasses and you can buy a new pair from Babylon (festival slang for the shopping area), forget your sunglasses at burning man however and you ask around until you've made a bunch of new friends and got a free pair of shades in the process. As one website put it, "If you forgot it at home, ask your neighbour."

The optimistic side of me would like to think the Burning man does shape and change all who attend for the better. However, it is just once a year and I assume for the rest of the time many of its values must follow the same 'leave no trace' ethic as the festival itself. As the sites inhabitants peel off to their respective homes they head into a society, which as a whole, champions individual gain rather than community spirit. Like the man down the road who still thinks mullets are cool, society seem to be stuck in a hangover from the bin of Thatcher/Reagan economics in the 1980's. Most of us know this individualised society is wrong but we have no idea how to get out of it.





Illustrations by Ellie Mains

Fortunately for us, the tide is turning. On Websites such as freecycle, members give away unwanted items without asking for any reward (offering anything in return is prohibited) and the Free Economy (or freeconomy at www.justforthe loveofit.org), set up by Mark Boyle (the famous 'Moneyless man'), encourages skill sharing and the sharing of tools. Freecycle is now long-established and has grown to such a size that many large cities now host many different freecycle groups for different parts of the city. Everything from pumpkins and tomato plants to cars and computers are on offer - all for free!

Freeconomy works in a slightly different way but its ethos is very simple, if you need something you ask for it, if you have something you offer it, and you do so without the need for anything in return. Moneyless Mark talks of how he came up with the idea when one Sunday morning he heard his neighbour's lawnmower start up. A while later, another lawnmower cranked its engine further down the street, each man had invested in a mower, paid for its up-keep and cleared a space for it to be stored. If the first man had lent his lawn-mower to the second, then in turn to everyone in the street, only one machine would need to be purchased for each neighbourhood. The theory does hold up. Whilst living in Bristol I needed a garden shredder to make compostable woodchip from my garden clippings. I asked for one on the Freeconomy and to my surprise, three people offered me use of theirs. Had I bought a shredder it would have been now used a grand total of three times and cost me a considerable amount of money for the privilege.

On a more personal level, I've found working with others a fantastic way to achieve things that would either be far too time consuming or prohibitively expensive on my own. Regular readers of *Dodgem* may remember in issue one I talked about the time my girlfriend and I lived for six weeks without spending any money. At the end of the six weeks I broke my spending with a book called *'The Barefoot Bee-Keeper'* by Phil Chandler. As it ended what I'd felt to be, an important time in my life the book held a lot of meaning to me. Since reading about the plight of modern bees, I knew then that I wanted to keep bees. However, the obstacles in my way seemed insurmountable; I lacked the time, the money, the equipment, the know-how and a site in which to place the bees.

Shortly after buying the book I enrolled on a sustainable horticulture course in order to hone my gardening knowledge and as I was new in town, hopefully meet some likeminded people. Around a month into the course I brought the book in with me and asked if anyone in the class would be interested in keeping bees using the 'barefoot' method of top-bar hives, as described in the book. To my surprise the answer was an almost unanimous yes! We began meeting regularly and discovered the author was not only local but a friend of friend of someone on the course. We clubbed together to pay him a small amount of money to tutor us in beekeeping, then a few months on and we managed to get a small grant from a charity supporting local community projects to pay for the wood to build the hives. The bees themselves came free from Buckfast Abbey, famous for both its bees and its 'Tonic Wine' (A favourite for underage drinkers in Scotland!) The abbey were scaling down their operation and our four colonies were surplus to requirements. From this starting point we now have an apiary of seven hives and we're considering selling hives and running courses in bee-keeping.

I could never have imagined things would have turned out the way they did but the more people you have on board any particular project the more you invite strange coincidences. Also having a large group of mixed ages meant we had over 600 years of life experience to draw on. Those with wood-working skills could make the hives and instruct others, ex-charity workers could chase up funding, and with a group, responsibility is shared so no one person has to look after the bees alone. With the success of the bees we followed on with a growing collective in a disused horticultural sized greenhouse and we're in the process of forming a chicken collective and a garden nursery.

The over-riding ethos for all is a sense of shared responsibility and shared outcome, be it food, eggs, honey or in the case of the nursery, a shared income. Rather than an attitude of 'I'm not doing that if they aren't' instead the more positive spin of 'they did that, perhaps I should do this'. Perhaps the distortion of Darwinian theory where only the fittest survive should be replaced by the old adage of strength in numbers. Ants, bees, dogs and apes and in most cases humans can, and do, work together, propping each other up and becoming much more than a sum of their parts. We are not solitary creatures and there is no reason why we should act as such.



I'D RATHER BE MC HAMMER THAN JIMMY NAIL

YES I WOULD, I SURELY WOULD

FREE MUSIC
WALLCHART
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NORTHAMPTON EDITION



Worrying rise in mobile use by under-zeros

Concern over amount of social networking by foetuses



Quincy Savage
Northampton

In the latest social networking craze, in-womb baby monitoring devices are being used by unborn children to message each other over the internet.

Thousands of the WombView™ devices have been implanted by anxious parents wanting to keep track of their baby's development by analysing statistical information and streaming live video to their iPods.

But the tech-savvy youngsters have worked out how to piggy-back on the datastream to send messages to each other.

"Lolz, just banged my head on the placenta!" tweeted 34-week old foetus *Jus'Floatin*. His friend *BillyUmbilical* replied with a jpeg of the word 'FAIL' superimposed over a webcam photo of himself mooning the camera.

Other trending topics included 'Getting out soon, can't wait to see my new crib!' and a debate about the annoying tendency of new bloggers to type 'FIRST' as soon as they develop thumbs.

One mum-to-be explained that

'Lolz, just banged my head on the placenta! #gettingcrampedinhere'

she became aware of the problem when her baby's movements increased. "I thought he was kicking more than usual," said Pamela Morris, 33. "But apparently he just had the device set to 'vibrate'."

However, the craze has received criticism from older children. "My little sister spends all her time sleeping or texting," complained Tom Stanley, three-and-a-half.

"I have to tidy my room before I'm allowed on the computer. And if I want to go to the toilet, I have to use a potty – but she just wees in mummy's tummy."

"It's so unfair!" he sulked. "These kids today, they don't know they're born." ■

Pet Dispensary
RSPCA criticise
puppy vending
machines
Society



Use of pie charts
rises 34%
Business



Not so
much
alpha
male as
betamax
My
dating
life
Lifestyle



Hot new artist brings the roof down

Shocking exhibition by radical conceptual artist



Emily Veganburger
London

Survivors of Paul Sampson's final performance piece were calling it a 'life-changing, if not life-ending event'. The 45-year-old artist came to prominence just six short weeks ago, having laboured in obscurity for decades whilst producing unfashionably traditional paintings.

He burst into the limelight with a sudden switch to conceptual art, beginning with an eight foot high pile of elephant dung exhibited outside the Tate Modern gallery. Topped with a sign reading '£0', it was entitled *Worthless Pile of Shit*.

Critics loved it, hailing it as "a literally breathtaking work". Seemingly invigorated by this reaction,

Sampson immediately embarked on a follow-up.

Rescuing items from his neighbours' bins, he used an industrial lathe to chamfer down all the sharp edges, constructing them into a two-storey high exclamation mark en-titled *Pointless Trash*.

Yet more acclaim was showered on this second piece, but rather than attend any of the parties held in his honour by the art world elite, Sampson threw himself into an even more groundbreaking work.

In a radical piece of performance art, he spent several days bashing his head against a large brick wall,

'Critics hailed it as a literally breathtaking work'

using the resulting blood to smear the words 'THIS IS NOT ART' on it in eight-foot high letters.

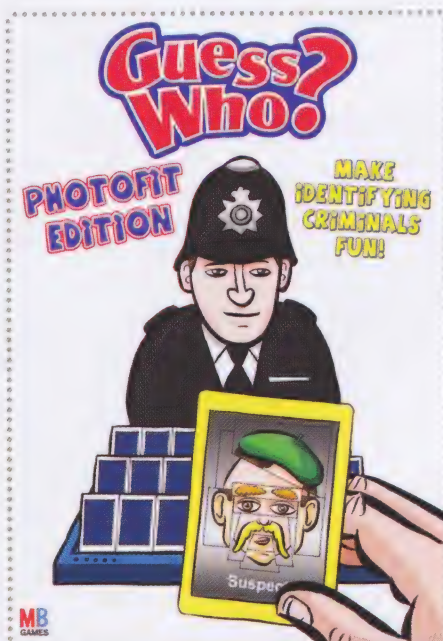
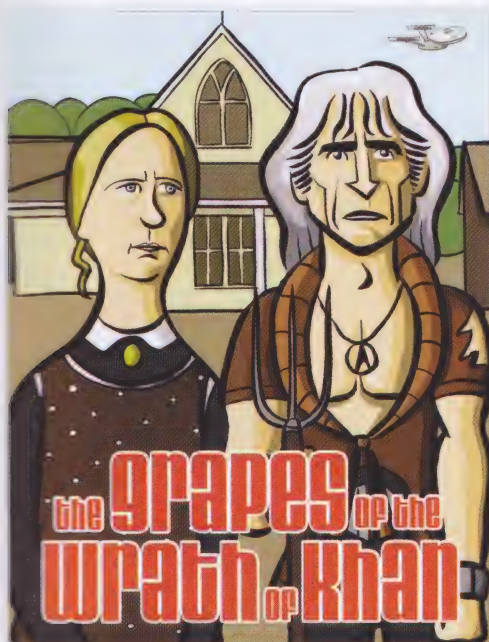
It was the huge critical success of this work that led to his decision to hold last night's exhibition, inviting the many admirers whom he had previously sought to avoid.

As a huge crowd of adoring critics and celebrities crowded into his purpose-built exhibition hall, Sampson, speaking from a large yellow bulldozer in the centre of

the building, gave an impassioned speech about how art should truly reflect the feelings of the artist, before driving the vehicle into the central supporting column, collapsing the structure down upon them.

"It was magnificent" sobbed lone survivor Darren Statement, as he was pulled out of the rubble.

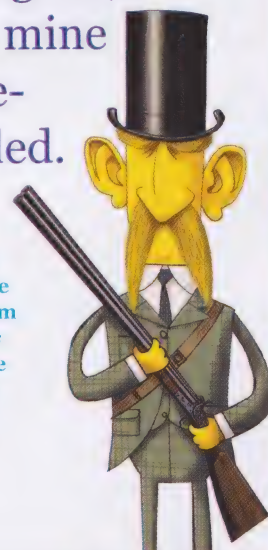
"A radical reimagining of Carl Andre's seminal 1974 work *Big Pile of Bricks*. Clearly, Paul Sampson was a true devotee of conceptual art. Although his body lies lifeless and mangled, we can at least ensure that his name is forever associated with the art form he loved."



Surnames or shotguns, I prefer mine double-barrelled.

Continuing our exclusive excerpts from *Derring Dos & Don'ts*, the memoirs of Col D John Coleman

Weekend magazine



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BYE, MONSTER

BY STEVE AYLETT

In an excerpt from Steve Aylett's book **NOVAHEAD**, our hero plants a polygraph bomb programmed to trigger when someone lies.

I should have gone straight in but I wanted to leave a message first. I found a study lined with shelves that bore legal texts bound in cream imitation skin. On a wooden mount was the tusk of a senator. Pivot's desk felt like a malignant wedding shrine. It was the work of a few moments to prime and place the voodoo bomb in the back of a small side-drawer.

Something flashed in the doorway - Murphy raised a gun and her eyebrows, as if raising a toast. It was another of those small-boned pistols she seemed to favour, I don't know which brand. She seemed amused. 'How'd you get in here, hotshot?' 'The front door.'

'It's a good enough story, I can't prove it wrong.' There was some noise behind her - Pivot entering the apartment.

'Hey, Pale!'

Pivot appeared, taking his coat off. 'Eh, what's all this?'

'You won't believe it, I just found him playing the sleuth in here.'

'Oh? Well, he played it wrong.'

'When I get up in the morning I know I've already made at least one mistake,' I told him, edging away from the desk.

'Tie him in a chair,' Pivot said.

Murphy lowered her glint pistol a little and shot me in the right leg.

So I was distracted as she pushed me into a chair that looked to have been fashioned out of blackstrap molasses and tied my hands behind it with some sort of plastic wire. Only then did she frisk me and obtain the machine pistol and mundane mags.

Pivot stood near the desk, observing silently.

'You're in a bad mood, Pivot,' Murphy observed. 'Shall I come back when you've had time to sneer?'

'Yes,' he said, the simplicity of his reply taking the wind out of her. She left us. He scrutinised me a while. 'I see one whose face is the exhausted finale of evolution along several quite different lines: the fish, the reptile, and the snail or gastropod. Features of all these are evident in your expression. And you're a stretched wreck. What happened to your head?' 'When your plant called you and everyone else cottoned on, it was a regular jaw-car jamboree.'

'Well, you've caused me considerable trouble. The round in your thigh from the purse gun, it's pocket ammo, what do the hard men call it ...?' 'A placeholder.'

'Placeholder ammo, that's it. But we could do something more permanent. My coke girl keeps her finger off the trigger only by effort of will. Or you could be strangled until you have the blue face of a Vedic deity. I could afford either.'

He was stood there with his hands in his pockets, as if wondering what to do with me. He combined stillness with precision in a way that creeped me out by suggesting he was forever held in readiness for something.

Fear - I'd forgotten what it was like, that it wasn't a decision. I tested whether I could discreetly shift the chair back by degrees. Maybe the desk itself would direct the blast the other way. I was sat hostage to Pivot and his suction-mounted morality. 'Siddown, Pivot, you're straining my neck.'

'I won't, for the moment. My ass was removed in childhood. On the plus side, the acuity of my remaining senses has increased a hundredfold. I read the gap better than almost anyone. Pattern recognition.'

'I wondered how you'd got where you are.'

'Yes, I don't really have anything else when it comes down to it. Ract has an art-collection marriage and two full-blown sons. Darkwards has his ballroom dancing or whatever he calls it. They go along that way and ignore the little jump to either side that would take them into a joke. While I have a silence barely worth coming home to, and not a ray of suspicion to enliven me.'

'All this dead stock,' I said, shucking my head at the surlyguy busts and books ignored by the yard. 'Nice home for the ornaments. Where do you live?'

'Exactly. No-one suspects a living creature could dwell in such a museum. So I'm at peace outside the narrowly seething bandwidth of bomb-zombies and perseverants. I wouldn't usually discuss it with someone who behaves as you have. There are two types of people in the world, Atom.'

'Two? Used to be there was over a hundred; then twelve. Pretty soon they'll have it down to one.'

'Oh, you're breaking my heart,' he said, going around the desk and sitting down. 'Are you alright? You look almost scared. Not what I expected. Your intel jacket implies you've been translated through several dimensions side-on to ours and are probably a much more exotic creature than we can see, the Atom we all know being its prick, merely.'

'I've been described as a prick, that's true.'

'Well I don't hold with urban legends about inter-beings and so forth. At this stage people will claim anything.'

'I've said nothing about it either way.'

He casually shunted a drawer on the opposite side from the primed one and retrieved a Bernardelli P-018 pistol which he held pointed negligently in my general direction, his hand resting on the desk. He looked odd with a gun, like he didn't know which end went in his gob. 'This is not really a necessary preface to what I have to do, but you'll hear me out, I know it.' I was nauseous from the latest wound and the stress of waiting for the two face salute. I'd been hoping it would be over quickly but the bastard was eloquent.

I was unconnected, pigmentless and poor in Beerlight, which is a textbook debtropolis if you take out the head-crime element. The devil; the police - I could not take one and leave the other. I could have gone the British route of guns and whisky - but why not go direct and trade in money? It's prestige without content but that only means you can fill in the details according to your taste.'

'Did you do anything interesting with it?'

'Of course not - look around you - nobody does when it actually comes to it. By the time I realised with horror that life was no mere passing fancy, I'd grown attached to its compensatory malices. It's easiest to boost from above. Meanwhile I needed a legitimate front, but not so legitimate that I'd seem unbelievable. At first the law and its frankly incalculable demands seemed merely another arena for career ambition. I moved among senators, semi-local officials, military generals and others in on the deception, attempting to emulate their moral words and immoral acts, and finally achieving this balance by trial and error. Out winning claws and minds, demanded money, naming for its destinations which were not always false, though never justifying its source. Civilisation had purported to regard crime as a disease rather than a part of its metabolism. For centuries authority had thought to collapse the calculus of crime by pressing the centre of its gravity, until it realised this was also its own centre of gravity. This is only one challenge of fighting something that travels like a sand-dune, shedding cells constantly. Optimists viewed the law as no more than a desperate measure of continuity, until it began changing every week. Most, then, concluded the law was capricious because it varied with time, geography, funds, influence, interpretation and so on from one day to the next. But the motives for law are common and unchanging - that's the continuity. Take, sympathise, control. But the middle one has become a luxury. It gives nothing back.'

The play of light and shadow over his ignorance wasn't very entertaining, but it seemed he believed what he was saying.

I played for time. 'A society stemming from these principles will demand more from its people than they can give.'

'Nonsense. Each crucible of cowardice is taxed according to its compliance. And it's a good ferment for discipline. Vulgarly ties the doubtful to the state's crimes - that and the social contract, a deal clearly made on unequal terms. Stagnation as policy - a surrogate freedom, carefully posed. Admittedly it was a society that operated well but was so finely balanced it left no room for error.'

I interrupted before anything more could emerge from the pale valve he had for a mouth. 'You're stalling for time,' I said. 'Why?'

'There's a schedule,' he said, with an almost coy smile. After a moment's reflection, he continued. I think he'd forgotten the gun. 'As a protection at street level the law is a rumour, a phantom - ghostly until invoked, and invoked only after the harm has been done. Well, you know all this. It cuts off the tail, not realising where the heart and brain are located.'

'In the cautious man, they're in the tail.'

'That's not quite what I meant. In any case, to write a law is much easier to do than explain what you mean by it. That's part of what it's for. I experimented with explaining and found I need to give a reason convincing only to the simple-minded. Selling jargon as fact. Well, pretty soon lawyers outnumbered people by two to one. By this time a hundred-weight of hokum was being transferred into statute every day. Humanity, the eternally narrowing mind. I'm proud to have been present at that supreme moment when everything was illegal at last. Law was perfected - on paper, anyway. It was strange, that day. An eclipse clicked into place like an optician's test lens.'

'I remember that eclipse.'

I had been walking through a field with an antique Walther P38 in my right hand. It stung as if stuck to my hand by the blowback. Then the gun and everything else chilled. That German pistol unglued from my palm as though what I had just done was no longer my responsibility. I felt insulted, resentful. Looking back and to the left, I watched the whispering field darken as the sun closed out. I was seventeen.

'Was that the day, then?'

'I don't believe nature was aware of what had been done, but it was a hard coincidence.'

'Got bone-cold for a while.'

'The Project of the Law was completed the only way it could be. The only way the clear-eyed had ever foreseen.'

Through a yard of pain I focussed on Pivot. It was like making eye-contact with a hen.

'Maybe we should empty our minds and meditate on a simple image such as a geranium.'

His silver eyebrows rose as slowly and steadily as the mercury in a thermometer. 'You are deceiving no-one, Atom.'



'Damn right.'

'Tell me then - do you believe in the hour of inferno? The end of civilisation?'

'I can't imagine why anyone would believe otherwise.' 'Dull though you are, I don't believe you can't imagine that.'

'How about you?'

'I believe it alright. Ract, Darkwards and myself have an intricate and friendly rivalry of long standing. We all three had invested in a few wildcat nerve gas stocks, and it struck us all at once that menacing a foreign country is ideal, whether it's baffled, ready or both. These durable motivations are a godsend to profiteers. To wax profit from catastrophe. Once you've made a beginning, the rest generally follows on its own. We'd wager on outcomes, too. But that gets boring, and we could see where things were going. Ract and Darkwards don't have my intuition - they use a little gizmo, fissure science - which isn't really prediction. Most things are obvious, really. So-called "prophecy" is easy. Optimism is the chief thing that prevents it. People can barely see the present because of that, let alone the future. And I know the medievalists determined the end of everything at 19,683 but nobody believes we'll last that long. The only variable is the method.'

Pivot was hauling several unseen planes of motivation with him like aerials, but he was unaware of them. They were notes he'd pinned silently to his own back. He had succumbed to the complexities of his own evasions, writhing inward like a spiral. It's a challenge to bull's-eye the golden section of artifice.

'What else to do? The murder of civilisation is not even a very interesting spectacle. We see the future as a box of accidents - a terrible thing - intrusions ready to be let loose. Darkwards foresees a comet - or asteroid, I forget which. Ract finally settled on the CERN loop, cliché though it is. I can't believe in Darkwards' impending visitor. Honestly, a comet? Why accuse minerals of fate?'

I was sure he didn't feel the reality of the enterprise, a state allowed by his belief that many facts were mere transitory guests. 'Volcanoes aren't done for practice, you nimrod. You'd put fruit on a chain, wouldn't you?'

Pivot frowned. 'Let me pay you the courtesy of being blunt - we live in the World to End All Worlds. Earth connects little pains, and the last few connections are being made. Let's think big. The kid - Partenheimer. I heard about him before the others. I thought "Let me not repeat the sins of my forefathers, but innovate." So I bet on the kid. I couldn't leave this match of Jericho lying around. But a thing like that, there was a fierce temptation to interfere with the unfortunate creature to influence the outcome. How big do I win if I force it?'

'Why win a bet that'll kill you?'

Pivot seemed despondent at having but one mouth with which to sigh. 'Why lose one that'll kill you? There's a theory I don't believe, that gamblers want the worst to happen, a covert suicide. But every habit started with nature. Addiction is basically anything you can't stop doing.'

'Breathing?'

'And any addiction can be ended. The point is this planet's circling the drain, so of course we opened a book on it. I've got money circling the globe in five marked satellite accounts and it's all worthless, dead. There are no commercial vices anymore, not really. But operationally, the habit remains. You think things can ever be twisted into a neat little bundle and disposed of? Things are messy.'

'Someone else told me that recently.'

'You've seen an animal die, Atom. You can see from its eyes, near the end, that it knows it's dying. There's an acceptance, finally. Well, here we are. At the acceptance. A prosperous doom is all we demand of the immediate future. That apocalyptic young man I have in my wine cellar - that's the doom I favour. A win is just the icing on the coffin. There. Now you know everything about me.'

'I don't buy it. I've looked at the kid. His etheric's like Hawking radiation, carrying no information.'

'I'll take that gamble. When you connected with the kid we resolved to keep you under observation, a task which alarmed and exhausted us more than we could have expected.'

'I predicted the collapse ten years ago. It's on record. I don't see why my involvement now would make any difference.'

'Yes, there would seem no reason not to kill you at once, what do you think?'

'I agree.'

'But I'm not going to do that,' he said with a quiet, careful quality. 'No, I'm going to lock you in with the moon cow and see how you get along. I might even leave you there and wait on the other side of town.' He handed it over like there was a bomb at the centre of the answer.

'What do you expect me to do?'

'Whatever comes to mind.'

The setup was iterating an infinite array of new edges as I looked at it.

'Until something happens,' he went on with a bland expression. 'The world can be decided in the middle of a moment where an insect stops. Just like that - generation dismissed.'

I was disgusted. 'What good are you, really?'

'Oh, come on. Can you really mourn the passing of this country, its pea-sized minds and planet-sized children? One half of the truth is that humanity is inescapably and demonically evil. The other half doesn't bear thinking about.'

Pivot's face was blank. But he was grinning just beyond the edge of what I could see. I braced too late for the blast, a cobalt flare leaving a fuzzy blot in mid-air, haloed pink with blood particulates. I had something painful in my eye. The shelves were burning. I was laying back on my tied hands and pieces of chair. Everything was jumbled up. The scorch was quickly overcome with the sick sweetness of black blood and offal.

Murphy the Fed leaned in very close, her yellow corona of hair zinging my skin as she cooed, 'Oh, baby, you lost an eye.'

LOUIS LOUIS LOUIS LOUIS

BY SAVAGE
PENCIL + DAVID
QUANTICK



The great Edwardian illustrator of cats and "Catland" has been discovered in an asylum for insane persons. The man of whom HQ Wells said "English cats that do not look and live like Louis Wain cats are ashamed of themselves" has been destroyed by the very same cats who made his fortune.

LOUIS LOUIS LOUIS LOUIS

GAME SET
AND MATCH TO ABBY!



TO BE
CONTINUED



BURROUGHS

The following previously unpublished piece was written by Alan Moore for a one-off performance at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall on the 16th of June, 2005, as part of the Patti Smith-curated Meltdown Festival, an evening of homage to Smith's friend, Beat legend William Burroughs. The work was delivered at the event (which had been given the umbrella title 'Pages from Chaos') along with readings from the awesome Ms. Smith, mighty Iain Sinclair and luminous Tilda Swinton, accompanied by genius Tom Waite's affiliate Marc Ribot, dazzling N.Y. improv pianist Matthew Shipp, a more-ethereal-than-ever Jason Spaceman, and Patti Smith on clarinet. The result was a spectacular shamanic fugue of which the curator herself remarked "Bill would have loved this".

Nineteen Fourteen, now that my friend, that was a piece of fusewire. Spitting hot blue phlegm on fire it burned the century down to its bang with Kafka trotting out The Trial, Pound kicking off his Cantos and Atomic numbers all get figured out by X-ray method, Germany starts making stainless steel, the Archduke's motorcade pulls into Sarajevo bang bang bang and we can measure now the life and death of stars.

Nineteen Fourteen and in St. Louis, 4664 Berlin Avenue changed it to Pershing Avenue during the war, high garden fences sick with morning glory, ash-pit septic tank down at the bottom and past that the River of the Fathers with its turd armada, gas vents, toxic marbling on the meniscus. Right there Laura Lee as was she give birth to some terrible sheep-killing dog, some kind of wolf in boyskin, called him Bill.

Frog soundtrack out the fishpond, freight train keening steam and heartache, raised on calculator gravy, had a maid could talk to bees. Great God but it smelled wonderful, coal gas and roses, shit and dodgem ozone off of the electric cars, right up the street somebody whistling the East St. Louis Toodle-oo. Gets his first gun at eight years old and bang, just like his grandpa the inventor this is starting to add up.

He wants to be a murderous exotic mastermind, silk pillows and a poison ring, he wants pulp magazines with breath that smelled like mummy dust, to be the Seldom Seen Kid, Jack Black's You Can't Win. Fifteen years old, the Ranch School at Los Alamos they jerked each other off, a diary narrative so awful he won't write for years, the sperm exploding white between his fingers, bang, an A-bomb premonition.

He grows up a Mayan scholar, soaks semantics from Korzybski, he can hit a roach with his pyrethrum gun from right across the room. Bohemian totem pole to Kerouac and Ginsberg in New York, making the croaker for bad script with Huncke, there's Joan's Benzedrine hallucinations arguing downstairs and David Kammerer was floating up the Hudson where the condoms leap and shoal off 108th Street.

Moth soot on the kerosene lamps. Coleman Hawkins bleeding into black East Texas night, then New Orleans, starts writing Junky parchment lost beneath some pulled-down diner out in Jacksonville and so on down to Mexico. It's 1951, everything sweaty with Korea one million civilians massacred at No Gun Rhee the knife grinder is calling from the street and it's about time for our William Tell act.

Bang his only intimate connection busted, nowhere he can get that human medicine any more so in Peru he's hunting yagé also called Telepathine. He wants to merge, to end the loneliness, some dreadful schlupp of mollusc fusion scares the Jesus out of everyone, "but I don't want your ugly old cock". 1953 the structure of the DNA revealed and birth of Brutalism, going crazy in Tangiers with grief, dollar a day.

The word-board, yellow foolscap rising round his feet into some ancient city got each generation's East 7th Street fire escapes and tenements piled on the crush below. Some Cuban bandleader leaves Kiki dead in bloody bedsheets caught him banging the percussion out his All Girl Orchestra. Comes blue sparks in the orgone box, chews sweet majoun, sways on the cold precarious ropewalk over Interzone.





MORE PRICKS THAN PRIZES

BY TOM PICKARD

Newcastle 1968

'Do you think this hash is coated with opium, Basil?'

Basil Bunting took his lunch break upstairs in the Rose and Crown where he grumbled about having to proof read stocks and shares all morning for the local rag while his eyes were thickening with cataracts. He took the handful of quid deals of the 'black Paki' hashish that I was selling around the pubs and held one to his nose and sniffed it, then shook his head in discouragement and suggested that I was taking too many risks for too small a reward. There was a truth in that and I was lucky not to have been caught because each sale was an exposure to the risk of arrest. It made sense to sell larger quantities in fewer transactions. Although I worked the pubs with a couple of friends, The Body Beef and Jock the Fox, and we alternated making the sale in the busy bars with keeping watch by the door and holding the stash, it was still too many risks for too little money. But it fed the kids and paid the rent and mostly kept the bailiffs off our backs. Mostly; a week earlier my typewriter, writing desk and chair had been sequestered along with a few other domestic items and sold in the auction room at the bottom of the street for pennies.

'Let's have another pint of Bass, Tom.'

The poet gave me the money and I went to the counter to collect the drinks. When I returned he was taking the first pull on a 'full strength' Senior Service cigarette and enjoying it. He took up his drink and after swallowing a mouthful told me of smoking opium with the chief of police in Tehran towards the end of the Second World War. When I queried his keeping such company he said:

'He was an amusing bloke. On one occasion, after a smoke, the charcoal stove flared up and set fire to the curtains.'

'Fuckinell,' I interjected.

'All we could do was lie back and admire the flames until a servant ran in to extinguish them.'

'How'd you come to know him?'

'He used to visit me once or twice a week to compare notes.'

And perhaps anticipating my next question and forestalling it with a direct look in the eye which somehow forbade and foretold, he began another story.

'Late one dark night an alcoholic, an opium smoker and a hashish smoker arrived outside of the high city walls to find the gates locked until morning. It was very cold, there was no shelter and they were ill-clothed and ill-shod. Let's smash the door down, said the alcoholic. Let's crawl through the keyhole said the hashish smoker. Let's float over the wall said the opium addict.'

He handed the quid deals back to me.

'You know, Tom, the best way for a poet to survive, without a patron, is to find a sinecure. It used to be the Church, but these days it's more likely the BBC, or the British Council, or the universities, I suppose. Anyway I've got to get back to bloody work.'

As we walked through the Bigg Market lanes towards the newspaper offices at Thompson House he told me that the city centre was built around a medieval street plan. Then, before clocking in, said;

'Of course they'd never give you a sinecure, but you might be able to manage in a country where the standard of living is low.'

There are careful calculations, amongst Basil Bunting's papers, on the cost of surviving in the Canary Islands in 1933 where he'd gone to live after finding life in Rapallo intolerable because of his friend and mentor's alarming enthusiasm for Mussolini. Bunting wasn't alone in being repelled by the fascist crowd beginning to surround Ezra Pound; another of his former disciples hired a plane and dropped anti-fascist leaflets over Italy until he was shot down and killed. From Tenerife, in 1934, Bunting wrote to Pound: 'Every anti-Semitism, anti-niggerism, anti-moorism, that I can recall in history was base, had its foundations in the meanest kind of envy and in greed. It makes me sick to see you covering yourself with that kind of filth. It is not an arguable question, has not been arguable for at least nineteen centuries...it is hard to see how you are going to stop the rot of your mind and heart without a pretty thorough-going repudiation of what you have spent a lot of work on. You ought to have the courage for that: but I confess I don't expect to see it.' It must have been a difficult letter to write as Pound had taught him a great deal about poetry up to that moment—and he knew there was a long way to go. His apprenticeship to Pound begun in the early twenties when the older poet, hearing of the young Northumbrian's ballad and musical hall repertoire, got him out of jail after a drunken barney with a Parisian policeman. Bunting liked to recall that the jail stood on the same site as the one that held the 15th c poet François Villon while he composed in the shadow of the gallows. Life on Tenerife was comfortable, as they had just enough money to employ a maid and live in a decent pension. His American wife, Marion, recalled that 'he was frustrated by the hatred the English on the island felt for him...that he was almost insane.' Marian attended Popular Front meetings while Bunting preferred to play chess on the hotel balcony with whoever would give him a game. He found a companionable partner in the American Carl Derup who confirmed, 'he felt ill at ease with colonial types and did not make friends easily, did not meet any English people in all the time he was there. We shared a common bond in our aversion and fear of fascism, and I spent many hours listening to BB interpreting the news.' After February 1936 he found another occasional chess partner. Spain's Republican government had demoted General Franco and sent him into exile, as governor of the Canaries, where he continued to plot his fascist coup. While Bunting played chess with the general Marian continued



to attend leftist anti-fascist meetings. Seeing the coming troubles he travelled for a month in search of a safe place that was cheap and remote; a warm refuge for a young family. He was unable to persuade his pregnant wife to move to an obscure part of Portugal with their two kids so they bought tickets for the passage on a boat to Southampton. A week after their departure the Canary ports were closed and the headlines that greeted them in Britain told of the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. Three months later the Jarrow March would pass through London, as would other anti-fascist and unemployed groups—people from his own country, unemployed miners, steelworkers, shipbuilders; hungry, angry people. But London put no bread in their mouths nor provided refuge for Bunting either because he had burnt his metropolitan literary bridges years before, when he wrote for an Italian newspaper in 1933 of the Bloomsbury crowd as ‘that dung heap believed to be a bed of lilies.....the sweet, drippy, unbearable smell of decadence which has recently pervaded every English product.... the stubborn rear-guard of a golden age in which the servants were servile and even the well-off tradesmen prudently bowed to Birth and Education.’ In 1932 he had also made a powerful enemy of T.S. Eliot when, in an issue of *Poetry* Chicago, he criticized the older poet’s magazine, *The Criterion*, which he called an ‘international disaster’ since Eliot began to ‘love his gloom, and regretfully, resignedly, to set about perpetuating the causes of it—kings, religion and formalism.... I have nothing to say against his poetry, amongst the finest of the age; but against his influence on the poetry of others, the involuntary extinguisher he applies to every little light, while professing, maybe truly, to hate the dark.” A much lesser, but influential, metropolitan force, Malcolm Muggeridge, was ridiculed in another review: ‘It is agreeable to fancy that some day it may not pay a man who has material for an essay to swell it to the length of a half guinea book by verbose repetition and argument round and round...’ In 1972 after an appearance on TV I happened to come under the glare of Mr Muggeridge. Muggeridge was then a governor of the BBC and said, in the hearing of the producer Barry Hanson, ‘that man will not work in the BBC again’. Muggeridge, it was later revealed, was the British Intelligence conduit through which Stephen Spender’s wages were paid when he was editor of the CIA house journal, *Encounter*. My TV performance also excited the distaste of the rightwing media watchdog and blacklist compilers, Aims of Industry.

London 1976

‘We’re sending you to Poland, Pickard,’ Jeff Nuttall told me in the Spring of 1976. We were part of the rabble pack of ‘entryist’ poets democratically elected onto the committee of the National Poetry Society who’d recently made Eric Mottram editor of *Poetry Review* and Hugh MacDiarmid president. An invitation had come to Nuttall, as chairman, to send representatives to the International Poetry Festival, Warszawa Jesien, from the Polish Writer’s Union. At the first railway stop in Holland I saw a Polish ‘Kontessa’ struggling to get four heavy suitcases onto the train and got out to give her a hand. It took two of us to lift each case. After talking for a while I invited her to a sleeping car berth in the Russian carriage that I had managed to obtain for a few dollars, the best part of a bottle of whisky and a few salutations to international brotherhood. A wee spat blew up between the Kontessa and the Russian but when he left us alone I muff-dived across the Iron Curtain—or the Spam Curtain as Alan Hull re-named it when I recounted the journey some years later. As the train entered and exited Berlin armed soldiers came in with dogs, step-ladders and screw drivers in their search for illicit people or goods. Despite the discomfort of the thirty-six hour journey the high black-market exchange rate for the dollar in Poland would make it a cheap place to live—even for me.

When I stepped, hung-over, down onto the lonely Warsaw platform that ran along the line going straight through to Moscow there was a red banner draped over a fence that read ‘Welcome Comrade Delegates.’ At first I thought it was for the poets until the train disgorged a group of trade unionists, equally hung-over.



The value of living in a cheap place was laid bare to me when I was on remand in HMP Brixton a few months later, taking advantage of an hour out of the cell to exercise in the small, well-scuffed yard. Remand prisoners were, perhaps still are, banged up for twenty-three hours a day in very small cells built for one but accommodating three. They must also share the air with the three pots of their own excrement between infrequent slop outs—and take their meals where there is barely space for one person to stand between the bunks. While walking in circles around the exercise yard with Costos, a Greek Cypriot and one of my fellow accused, he asked where I would go to when I got out.

'Warsaw.'

Costos was a dab hand at the three card trick which is performed on the run in Piccadilly and other heavily populated tourist spots.

'You should go to Uganda, my friend, you make good money.'

'How?'

'You're a writer, aren't you?'

'Yeah, but..'

'You can make a lot of money.'

'How?'

'Sell them biros'.

'Don't take the piss' I told him, but he wasn't.

'Look, what I walk in, you can do it. See this suit?' he said, holding his arms wide to display its cut, 'I could sell this for £500. And these shoes,' we both looked down at his smart footwear.

'I get £300.'

When the military dictator General Idi Amin threw the Asians and Europeans out of Uganda he lost a large swath of the merchant class and created a shortage of luxury Western goods for those who could afford and craved them. And Costos, as an exile in London, had served an apprenticeship to a fellow expat cobbler, so he knew shoes.

'What do you think I'd get?' He stopped and looked me over, tilting his head to one side and curling his mouth in appraisal.

'Well, maybe...' he began and paused empathetically.

'£20 for your suit. And your shoes...' his shoulders contracted and his voice became matter-of-fact again—'A fiver.'

'Got a hole in my shoes, but am back on ma feet again' I sang a line from the old blues song.

He smiled to himself and then walked in silent meditation.

'But, Lebanon!' He became soulful, 'you could get anything in Beirut.'

When we were being interrogated by the undercover Customs and Excise officers he kept silent and gave them his name, age and address only, until they coaxed a response from him, asking what he did for a living.

'General dealer.'

'General Amin dealer?'

During the interrogations, which lasted from midnight to six the following evening, I remained silent or claimed bad memory, especially when confronted with the photographs they'd taken in which I wore that white cotton cap.

London. November 1976: notebook entry

The raid on my flat took place two hours after a phone call to Joanna in Warsaw telling her that I had fixed up our next and (second) meeting—a holiday in Budapest at the Astoria Hotel. My passport was in the Hungarian Embassy being issued with a visa and I had paid the deposit on a 7 day trip to Budapest—£90 inclusive of room and food. Blissfully lit a spliff and settled down to work. I was beginning to see connections and gave the title 'Détente' to a poem that I was working on.

a swallow flew into this room and banged against the window
I caught her in my hand and felt her heart pelt against my palm like rain
we were both held
her wide swift wings in my anxious grasp

I wish to tell you about my prison
my fingers are the wings of god
his crushing love rushes through their veins

After an hour's work on the poem I lit another spliff and headed for the bog. There is no light bulb there as it might reveal to any chance visitors peering through the letterbox that I was home. Most chance visitors tend to be bailiffs. Or perhaps it was a habit from my childhood when my mother would hide behind the sofa until the priest who was rattling at the letterbox had given up and gone away in search of other sinners with a glass or two of whisky as he put their wavering world in order. Just as I unzipped my strides I heard an urgent knocking and froze. Another loud knock. They'll get sick before I do. Then a Newcastle voice called through the letter box.

'Tommy!' The voice was intimate.

'Tommy!' And familiar too. Hardly anyone calls me Tommy, except those who have known me from childhood. The voice was familiar, conspiratorial.

'Tommy, man!' And urgent.

'Who's that?' I stupidly asked, breaking my silence.



Peter."

I knew a couple of Geordie Peters, both of whom were capable of showing up late, looking for a doss.

Peter who?

Peter Byker. Peter from Byker? Knowing at least one Peter from Byker I opened the door and six hefty guys stormed into the narrow corridor, two of them armed, and pinned me to the wall.

You're bust, bonny lad.'

One hour later two officers led me downstairs in handcuffs into the dark street where we got into an unmarked car which was driven to New Fetter Lane, near Fleet Street, and parked outside of an anonymous 1950's office block with no name plate on the door or any indication of the nature of the business transacted there. I was taken into an empty office, on the fifteenth floor, with only a table and three chairs and which overlooked the Daily Mirror building. The two officials sat at an empty table and I was instructed to sit opposite. They studied me carefully as they loaded various files onto the desk between us. The senior officer opened an envelope and took out my slim month-at-a-glance diary for 1976 that had been removed in the raid.

'We've been following your career with great interest.'

He folded open the month of August.

'Are you a socialist?'

'I hope so. Why?'

'It says here, "picket South Africa House". Did you organise the picket line?'

'No.'

'What do you write poems about?'

'You didn't bring me here for a tutorial.'

'You've really disappointed me. I used to be a fan of yours,' said the Geordie arresting officer. Did I let the team down? Is there a team? And if there was, would he and I be on the same one? His disappointment raised more questions than I had answers to. I had been on the periphery of a scam from which I had gained enough to send something North for the kids and something for my mother with enough left over to buy myself a drink—but I wasn't going to splurt mea culpa into his coffee cup. Had I let him down? And who was he anyway? And what precisely was it that he knew about me that brought us to this place, face to face at 2.35 am?

His partner flipped open a file and produced a black and white photograph of Jack and me unloading a Ford Transit van in a street near Victoria, clearly shaking large plastic sheeting which, they suggested, was covered in traces of cannabis. We had been under surveillance for at least three months.

'That's you, isn't it?'

'I don't know.' I was shocked.

'Why not?'

'I've never seen myself from behind before.'

'You recognise the cap, though?'

He produced another photograph from the same occasion but on this one I was wearing a white cotton cap.

'It's the same cap as this, isn't it?' He showed me a press cutting from Time Out Magazine that included a photograph of me wearing the same cap at a tilt—'Jack the Lad' having a laugh over an afternoon pint in an Irish bar in North West London.

The article was about winning a CD Lewis Fellowship that situated me one day a week in a North London school for a couple of terms. It also mentioned that I was researching the Jarrow March in the Public Record Office where I was following a lead about a pre-war fascist conspiracy amongst leading industrialists and members of the establishment whose machinations had icily screwed and starved the Jarrow people. The BBC had been persuaded to partially commission a documentary for radio three which meant that I could talk to and record survivors and witnesses of the 1936 'hunger march'. It was an event known to me from an early age and I needed to find and lay out what I could of it. The Jarrow March was emblematic—regular Geordie issue baggage—an event that located the North East in the 1930's depression, despite the efforts of the new embarrassed image overlords. But it was also heroic and imbued with solidarity.

'Can you explain what you were doing on the occasion when these photographs were taken?'

They gave me the dates and times. I did not have the gall to plead my innocence and neither did I want to implicate anyone else so fell back on the felon's litany of dim recall. Another member of the 'gang', an Irishman, who was being interviewed in another room, when confronted with the same volume of evidence held his hands up and admitted everything—but would say nothing about anyone else, fearing, he implied, retribution.

'Listen they are heavy people. They're bad news.' When shown my photograph he said 'forget him'. But I knew nothing of that then, sitting in the stark room being watched through a dark glass by a senior officer who came in during the integration and ordered me to sit down again when I got up to pace the floor. They had photographs. They had the ounce of grass from my desk, other officers were still searching my flat and perhaps they had found or would find the two kilos of grass, three thousand pounds, and a hand gun that I'd concealed. One kilo of grass was mine but the money and the gun belonged to a friend.

The gun. Where had it been? What had it done? Of all the grass induced terrors that I suffered during the eighteen hours of arrest and interrogation the worst was the fear that they'd find the stash with the weapon. The interviews went on through the night, hour after hour, and I continued to plead bad memory or suggested an innocent explanation for the apparently damning evidence placed in front of me, but dread opened a chasm whenever I thought of the undiscovered gun. As the first team of interrogators changed over and the new ones came in my terror deepened—have they found the stash? The new team produced Jack's bank statements.

'Why has Jack been cashing cheques for you?'

'I'm overdrawn.'

As an expression of his disapproval of my unruly life the Geordie officer shook his head.

'I bought your last book.'

'That must have been the year my royalties doubled.'



'Look Tom, I know you probably did this to raise money for a literary project.'

They had clearly tapped into and sat through endless paranoid feuding literary telephone calls between me and the other plotters at the National Poetry Society in our head-on collision with the Arts Council, principal funding agency of the raggedy institution.

The CD Lewis Fellowship required me to 'teach' one day a week in a London secondary school which subjected a few pupils suffering from wayward talent or a sense of withdrawal to long sessions with me. One of the kids, who later became a DJ for a London radio station, had written a long novel at the age of twelve, and with some of the other kids we invented the reggae haiku. A small Caribbean boy who remained mostly silent throughout the sessions—and who may have been sent into my room because his teachers didn't know what to do with him—handed me a handwritten poem the day before my arrest and I've kept it with me as a talisman ever since.

I am cool ok
and so tall ok
I have free
so they
and you are so
ugly no one
can look at you

That was in November 1976, seven weeks after my return from Warsaw where I'd met and fallen in love with Joanna. By this time I was desperately trying to find the means to get back there or to bring her to London. Getting a passport from their government to travel to the West was as difficult for Polish citizens as it was for them to get an entry visa into Western countries. I was working, between long periods on the dole, in a range of poorly paid jobs none of which lasted more than a few weeks and was finding it difficult to pay the rent for the flat that I was illegally subletting from a friend of Pete Brown. Pete had helped me out once before, at the Edinburgh festival in 1965. While I was on stage at the Travers Theatre with a few fucked-off musicians from Newcastle, a theatre worker beckoned me off stage and told me that a couple of men wanted to see me and they wouldn't wait for the gig to finish.

"Who are they?"

"They don't look like poetry fans."

"Is there another way out of here?"

"Not really."

The men were thick-set and heavy shouldered.

"Mr. Pickard?"

"What wants to know?"

"Will you step outside for a moment, so we can talk?"

I followed them down the winding stairwell and when we got to a landing they snapped handcuffs on my wrists.

"The Newcastle police have a warrant for your arrest. They told us you'd be here."

There had been an article in the Newcastle Journal a week prior saying something like 'local poet to perform in Edinburgh festival' and they must have added it to their clippings library.

"We're taking you back to Newcastle."

The charge was for an unpaid electricity bill that magistrates had upgraded to a civil debt, which meant imprisonment for nonpayment. As they led me down the stairs we passed Pete Brown.

"What's happening, man?"

"Pete, can you lend me a few quid?"

He had recently received an advance for lyrics that he was writing with Jack Bruce and Cream, and generously paid the police while I resumed my performance on stage, a little shaken.



The political atmosphere was tense at the time of the 1976 Warsaw 'September' Festival. A few months prior, striking shipyard workers in Gdansk and Szczecin had been killed during a demonstration while others were imprisoned along with many supporters from the intelligencia including the then Trotskyist, Jacek Kuron, who later became a minister in the late 80s after the Solidarity revolution. Some of the Polish writers were very nervous and reticent to speak of the situation in the confined space of the Writer's Union restaurant but opened up as we wandered through the city. Walking up Nowy Swiat with an American writer who told me that he'd been asked by Encounter Magazine to 'see what you can get out of them,' our Polish companion gave an account of the overt and covert lives that they were forced to lead. As he described the Samizdat system of underground publishing and the complexities of Stalinist censorship—how they employed scholars to interpret metaphors—the American adjusted a partially concealed microphone. When I asked our guide if he were aware of it his response was a mixture of fear and frozen fury.

'Your cassette could be confiscated at the border. I would be arrested.' The American looked sheepish and put the kit away but I saw him trying again before we'd walked another ten yards. The foreign poets at the Warsaw festival were granted a five day visa and five nights accommodation in Hotel Polonia, which we shared with a visiting symphony orchestra. This presented me with a problem, as I wanted to stay indefinitely to pursue my courting.

The golden city

Earlier that year, back in London, I had gotten a job as a driver for a delicatessen merchant who supplied the boardroom kitchens of City institutions with their culinary needs (prunes on order every day) but after two weeks decided that I was being over-worked and underpaid—no overtime rates for instance—so I called in one morning and tried to renegotiate my salary. As labour was cheap and plentiful they sacked me.

when these gentlemen
eat their prunes and shit
the pound will float
and we will swim in it

Jack met me later in the day for a beer and said that he might be able to help out with a few days driving work—nothing he could talk about and in fact, the less I knew, the better it was for me. It wasn't wise to work blind, but I trusted him and needed the money. A couple of weeks later we hired a van and I drove him to a tool suppliers on the Tottenham Court Road where he purchased some very heavy bolt-cutters from a wry shop assistant who said 'oh no, not another Geordie fucking safe-cracker.' The following mid-day we drove to South London and parked the van outside of a pub and went in for a drink. Jack left quickly telling me to stay-put until he came back. He'd not gone long when Spud appeared red-eyed and flushed. 'How's it gannin?' I asked him. He presumed that I knew everything.

'It's fucking unbelievable, Tommy, man. There must be near a ton of grass. I hope there's no fucking bodies in the boxes, though.'

'Where they from?'

'Uganda.'

He was sweating and joyful from unpacking the crates. The news was a relief to me—it's only grass—but sparked a thread of fear at the scale of it. Caught up in the middle of the enterprise I couldn't see a way out but was cheered at the prospect of a decent bung. When Jack came back I told him what I knew and he was pissed off as it was his intention to keep me uninformed for my protection and his profit, I suppose.

We drove up a narrow cut and parked the van outside of an ordinary semi-detached house, whose owners were on holiday. There was a lawn out-back overlooked by French windows and over the fence in an adjoining garden a woman hung her washing on a line to dry. It was a warm summer's day and children played in the street. In the spacious living room I helped to open several large sealed wooden crates so the Greeks could check and weigh their contents: almost one ton of Ugandan bush which had been taken out of a bonded warehouse at the airport where it was officially awaiting transhipment. A little of the bush had to be stored overnight in my flat while the rest remained crated in the van parked outside. We filled a deep bathtub to the taps and when they left I skimmed off a kilo for a bonus, suspecting that my wages would not be commensurate with the risk I was taking. Fearing to conclude their business in the dark in case it drew attention, the armed Greeks insisted on staying at Jack's basement flat and treated him as surety until they could collect their share the following day. They drank whisky and played cards all night. Then the crates had to be emptied and refilled with ballast and returned to the bonded warehouse to conclude the transhipment.

Books as ballast

At first they were to be filled with hand carved African dolls but the dispatchers of the crates in Uganda had declared the contents on the Customs form as 'personal goods.' The dolls were thought too incongruous to serve that description so I suggested books and sold them all the volumes I had of Strand Magazine (which weighed in at ten kilos), an incomplete set of Encyclopaedia Britannica 9th edition, and a set of The Times History of WW1. Seeing all that ballast removed from my own shelves lifted my spirit. I thought I'd never get rid of them. However it was nowhere near enough so we drove the wagon to a second-hand bookshop in Marylebone, where we purchased three dozen cloth bound volumes of Punch and ten cloth bound volumes of Boys Own. We were the kind of customer that I could only dream about in my book dealing days. The shop



was inadequately stocked with heavy volumes so we drove to Farringdon Road where we purchased from the stalls set out there another two sets of the Times History of WW1, along with some religious authors. I sniffed amongst the books while Jack sat in the back of the wagon with the scales calculating the weight of the library that we were acquiring. 'We need another 250 kilo', he told me.

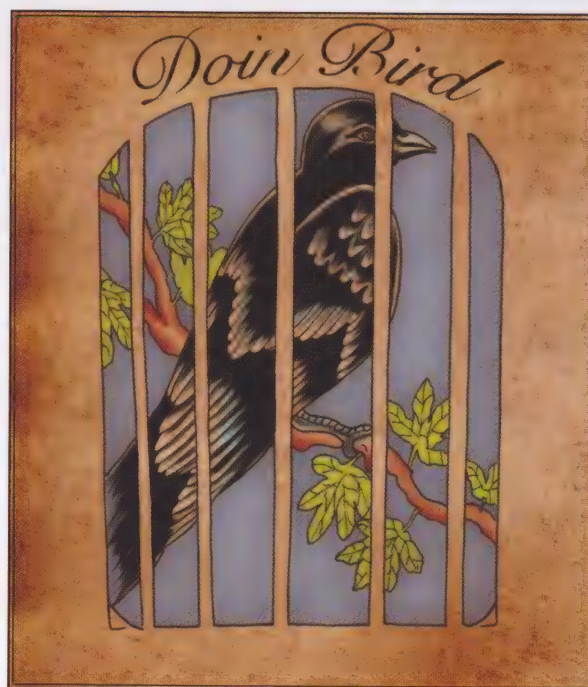
The ancient bookseller was blissful as we bought much of his space wasting dust gathering, back breaking, spirit deadening unread and unreadable religious and military texts; all those pounds of printed pages by puffing parsons, anaemic academics, bloated bishops, geriatric generals, corpulent combatants and high ranking haemorrhoidal heroes. All that catechistic catapasm, that militarist mucus, that pedantic pus from festering farts. The engaging entrails of emetic ambassadors, pestiferous papers by prudish pedagogues. I struggled to the wagon with arms full of books, and still he wasn't satisfied—so I purchased conquering chronicles by conceited commanders, acnéd abortions by abstemious abstractors, asphyxiating articles by arthritic archbishops, bromidicidal broadsides by bumptious broadcasters, asthmatic excretions by abject aesthetes, moralising morsels from mealy mouthed manufacturers, windy waffle from former centre forwards, bird brained banter by juiced-up journoes, celebrity cackle from coked-up cacky-crammed crack heeds, pontificating prime-time poseurs promoting puffed-up personalities, mendacious manuals by manic muff munching mullahs, post-modern pancakes flipped from non-stick pans stuck to the threadbare ceiling of their own gravity defying gravitas. And it still wasn't enough so I bought the works of talk show hosts, canting sofa cunts coughing up chintzy chunder, bloated volumes by toady poets who sit in circles blowing prizes up each others arseholes with straws—until we'd filled the crates.

Rat palace

I thought nothing else about it until I was arrested and remanded in HMP Brixton three months later when a Customs & Excise squad caught my friend and his colleagues with a second shipment that I had no knowledge of nor involvement with. They had been informed of the first transaction and had begun a stake out when we were loading the van and followed us as the crime proceeded. But I somehow, and unknowingly, made a wrong turn into an apparent cul-de-sac and managed to lose the convoy of police and customs' vehicles that were tailing and ahead of us. To recover their position they decided to mount surveillance, and for the next three months the phones were tapped and we were followed. Picking up the telephone one day I heard the security at Heathrow airport informing an operative that George Harrison and his wife were travelling under the names of Mr and Mrs Smith on flight 251 to New York. Although it deepened a suspicion that the phone was tapped I attributed that to my relentless traffic in love letters across the Iron Curtain as well as the research I was doing into an element of the British ruling class collaborating with Nazi Germany and a 'conspiracy' associated with the Jarrow March. However, it was between the first importation from Uganda and the second that I made the trip to Poland, fell in love and was desperate to go back. By the time I came to leave Warsaw we'd learnt enough of each other's worlds and words to want to meet again, but perhaps in another country, one that we could both visit without too much bureaucratic hassle. We decided on Budapest because it was a city that neither of us had been to. I would try to raise the money for the trip by selling the kilo of grass that I'd skimmed. A journey across the divide—Churchill's Iron Curtain or Alan Hull's spam curtain—a new intriguing girl with her own gaff and a new cheap city—what a vision to hold in mind. Somehow I was able to blag the soldiers on the train with sign language when they noticed that my visa had over-run by 10 days—or maybe they didn't care—and I began the thirty six hour train journey back to London, with a packed lunch and her scented scarf to keep me warm. I shared the compartment with an old peasant man without a word in common. We sat opposite each other at the window seats and gazed at the land as we glided over it. Long before dusk a deep mist rose over the woodlands and the landscape of thin strip farming. He opened his bait box and took out an apple, slicing off thin slivers with a knife that looked as old and knarred as the hands that held it, offering me a slice or two balanced on the blade.

When I got home to my flat in London the electricity and gas had been cut off for non payment and I went to bed cold and angry. Next day I awoke aching from the train journey but visited the Hungarian Embassy to apply for a visa. By the following week I had sold enough grass to send money north for the kids, pay the rent and get the electricity turned back on. One month later I purchased an airline ticket and booked a room in the old Hotel Astoria. Jack and his colleagues made the second transshipment five days before I was due to meet Joanna in Hungary. This time customs and police were following them all the way, and after a car chase they were arrested. Within the hour they came for me.

After my interrogation in Fetter Lane and on the way to the police station where we were to be held for a second night and charged I asked the customs officers if I could stop at a newsagents to buy a copy of *The Listener* as I wanted to read a review of my radio documentary about the Jarrow March broadcast the week before. They generously agreed, uncuffed me and I went to make the purchase. The review was niggardly, and in those circumstances it flattened me and I



felt hopeless and worthless. When we arrived at the police station, Jack and I were charged and locked up in separate cells. These were modern, windowless, and overheated and I wondered about the architect who had designed them. It was the first time that I'd been alone in almost twenty hours and I felt dirty and dehydrated. I could see Jack through the spy hole in the opposite cell walking back and forth, but could not catch his attention. I lay down and fell asleep only to be woken half an hour later by the desk sergeant who flung open the hatch.

"Are you hungry?"

"Fuckin clammin, marra."

"Breakfast at eight, then." He slammed the hatch shut and I fell asleep again.

Somehow I was able to disconnect my erect cock and began to suck it like a lollipop but without excitement. How can I reconnect it? Would I stitch it? Although there was no thrill in the member my groin ached with desire. A young girl, with whom I was infatuated, turned her head towards me with an inviting look.

"I was wondering how long your youth would last," she said.

"Why don't you live with me for three or four years and find out?"

"That's too long. I'll give you one. Or two, perhaps."

We passed the dark windows of an empty house with mouldy curtains that were crumbling like Mrs Haversham's wedding dress.

"We can live in there," she said as we went into a shadow-deep room with three unmade mouldy beds over which we had to walk.

Stepping from the first bed to the second my foot sunk into what was clearly an unresponsive body concealed beneath dirty bedding.

"There's someone in here and they're dead."

The girl peeled away the sheeting which fell apart in her hand and cried out when she saw an old woman's corpse which I was afraid to look at. I drew the girl's warm body close for her comfort and for mine.

And woke from the dream of love sex and death. Cold. The electric light was burning out of reach and my nostrils were baked and hurt. The cell, lined with modern white tiles and studiously inhuman, was almost airtight and stank painfully of an excess of disinfectant. The brown paint on the door was scraped and inscribed with names and a street in Belfast. There was no way of knowing what time it was or for how long I had slept and my throat was sore with refusing to answer questions. Next morning we were taken to the magistrate's court, denied bail, and remanded to Brixton prison. We were loaded onto a meat wagon and shut in locker sized cubicles that were so narrow my knees touched the walls opposite when seated. Jack told me later that he grabbed a quick one off the wrist in his cubicle on the journey from court-room to jail because it would be a long while before he'd have the privacy to do it again. As we travelled through the streets of London from courtroom to jail I wondered how long it would be before I'd see my family again and how to get a letter to Warsaw in time to warn Joanna that I couldn't make Budapest.

I sat with eight other men who had come from court in the draughty reception room with benches along the walls. At one end a prison officer stood at a high desk filling in forms. The prisoners shared tobacco—and sought a supply of matches. He faced the official in a half dream, then became aware of an aggravated impatience.

"Have you been in prison before?"

"No."

"Got to start some time. What religion are you?"

"Pantheist."

"We'll put you down as 'nil'. Sit down and wait till you hear your name."

"Next" An old man got up. One eye was blackened and blood-shot, his mouth was caked black with dried blood and clear liquid ran from his nose. The corridor was long and bleak and cold. The place was Dickensian, gothic, disgusting. Not an atheist. Nil. Short for Nihilist, maybe.

When my name was called out I went into a room with another pulpit-like desk around which several guards stood. They directed me to a set of large scales and told me to undress. Naked, I stepped onto the scales and my weight was recorded in a ledger. A guard with a white coat over his uniform dropped my balls into the palm of his hand and told me to cough. They directed me to a counter from which an officer distributed a towel, a bar of soap and a razor and pointed me towards the bath. Hot clean water. It was the first time that I'd been able to wash the stink of fear from my body in twenty-four hours and I relaxed momentarily. After getting dressed we were taken to C wing and stood in a queue on the ground floor next to some small cells. I was ushered into one where a hearty robust woman in late middle-age greeted me and introduced her sidekick, a mild mannered and thin man in his late fifties whom she would not allow to speak. She was a Shavian character, hungry for souls.

"I see you've entered 'nil' for religion but I thought I'd have you in for a chat. We're C of E so they usually send us the atheists. Now, the first thing I tell prisoners when they come in is that I've got nothing to do with the prison. Anything that you say in here is absolutely confidential and doesn't leave these four walls. So, if you've anything to get off your chest... you are down here as no religion but sometimes a little chat helps."

"I'm a pantheist."

"A what?"

"He means a nature worshiper... and they believe that...." her companion failed to complete his sentence.

"Why were you arrested?"

"I'm accused of smuggling cannabis into the country."

"And did you?"

"No."

"Are you with those other people, standing outside?"



"Yes."

"And did they do it?"

"No."

She looked at me carefully.

"Do you take drugs?"

"A bit of smoke."

"What a world this is turning into."

After the inductions we were allocated cells. Spud Murphy and I shared one with a young cockney thief—or so he said. Such was our paranoia that we suspected he may have been planted with us which meant that we couldn't talk openly in front of him. I chose the high bunk and Spud the one beneath and the cockney the one opposite. I thought the higher bunk would provide more privacy, or maybe it was a regression to childhood and the delight of riding on the top deck of buses. But it was a mistake as I found later. Most people in a remand prison who intend to plead innocent are rehearsing their defence from the moment of induction and live in a permanent state of fear and uncertainty until the outcome of the trial. The place stinks of fear and stink rises; the top bunk was not a wise choice. As soon as we were settled the young cockney made a request.

"Look, try not to shit in the pots 'cos we'll be smelling it all night. If you can, wait till slop out in the morning." But on that first night my guts gave out. All that fear and bad food conflated into an explosion. Likewise Spud. We were apologetic but the cockney shrugged it off.

"We'll try and get some newspapers or paper bags tomorrow and make shit parcels if it 'appens again" he explained. What that meant was we could shit in a newspaper or paper bag and throw it out of the window into the yard where it would be collected next day by someone on shit parcel duty. But at least we wouldn't have to sleep with the stink in our nostrils all night. Unable to talk freely to Spud and exhausted from the endless interrogations I just wanted to lie down and sleep. When the lights in the cells went out the cockney lay on his bunk and looked at the door with the light from the corridor visible through the spy hole. "Just think of it as the moon shining through a forest." His words were the last I heard before falling into an exhausted sleep where I dreamt that I fathered a child and witnessed its birth. As soon as he was born the child began to speak fluently and eloquently; I felt joyful. Then I was riding a horse with Joanna over steep hills above San Francisco looking at the ancient walls of China. We rode through generous, spacious country until a bell rang and the cell door was flung open. A wretched, shrivelled man stood snivelling over the pots of strong tea that he poured us from a large aluminium teapot carried on a trolley as he regurgitated the circumstances of his arrest and rehearsed his defence as though he'd known us all his life. And it was clear that he did this in most cells on the wing.

"What do you think of me chances?" he asked, after a long explanation of the circumstances that led to his arrest.

"You'll walk it," I told him.

"Yeah, the fucking plank," Spud added.

We drank the tea and rolled a smoke.

"Have you got some matches?" the cockney asked me so I threw him what I had and he took out the blade from his razor and began to carefully and slowly slice each match into two sometimes three flares that would light a snout. A screw came by and told us 'slop out' and we picked up our pots, formed a line and followed through to the bathroom where we dumped our crap and washed up. There was a short row of toilets with sawn-off doors, up-lifted by a few steps from the floor. This is what you were meant to hold out for. The throne of shyte. After the slop-out we went downstairs through the cage for breakfast.

Living in London without the means to travel back to see the kids often enough was corrosive. I could have remained in Gateshead, a few streets away, but my life had fallen apart then too when I could find no work of any kind to pay the bills. But I knew that the kids knew who we were and where we were, and where we are still. And that's all there is to say about it. There was no work in Newcastle worth the money until Eddy Kelley said he could get me started labouring on the city centre redevelopment. It was the highest paid building site in the city but it was against my principles because they were knocking the bollix out of the old 'toon' about which I had recently shot my mouth off on a BBC TV arts program and got onto the Aims of Industry blacklist.

'Our new Bias prize, the Bent Microphone award, goes to Full House, a BBC2 programme on December 9 centred on Newcastle. Bias Prize for this month goes to this programme, in which Newcastle was taken as the theme. Words by Tom Pickard, poet, refer to the speculative boot being put into Newcastle. The poem by Pickard called 'Guttersnipe' was read by him. This portrayed the views and values of a factory manager who believed the poet should be a labourer to breathe the fumes of capital. Industry is love, industry is life. Allusion made to the poet's father who died from the fumes and factory work—supposedly nobly, from the manager's view. This was the real dark satanic mills stuff that Dickens might have scripted if he had been alive."¹

But the rent was in arrears and it was too late to stop the rapist redevelopment so I accepted Eddie's offer and agreed to meet early Monday morning when he would introduce me to the chippy foreman. Just as I turned up at the building site to start work the lads came out on strike and there was nowt else to do but join the picket line. The company brought in train loads of scabs from London and after six weeks I despaired walking one night back over the new Redheugh bridge across the black Tyne to Gateshead with the traffic roaring past and a fierce wind raging. I just screamed from the lining of me guts into the gale. The next morning I threw some clothes and books together in preparation for a gig at Ted Hugh's Arvon Foundation in Devon where I was booked to spend the week as an instructor for a bunch of would-be writers, setting them exercises and reading over their creations. It was the only 'honest' money I would earn that summer, if money can ever be said to be 'honest.' As I found my seat and looked back across the Tyne to Newcastle the train gathered speed and I knew that I wouldn't be coming back. I was joining the region's oldest growth industry—the drift South—and resented it and the pain of leaving the kids.

¹Aims of Industry bulletin no. 6 Report On Industry On Television



Before breakfast anyone who wanted to see the doctor gave in their name and cell number. I'd woken with a raw throat, no doubt caused by the eighteen hours of interrogation I'd undergone the day before and the airless disinfectant police-cell. The doctor looked into my throat and suggested I gargle with salty water. But the good news was that remand prisoners were allowed to have food and half a bottle of wine a day brought in. When I was told that I had a visitor my spirit lifted. My good friend Eric Mottram was waiting in the visitors room and I went to sit opposite, disturbed to see him mopping his eyes. Although distressed by my dilemma his tears were for his dying mother. I assured him that I was okay, in good company, and there wasn't much else to say, really, because it looked as though I was fucked. He'd brought me a half bottle of wine and some decent food, and a book that he thought I ought to read, he insisted, with care; Joseph Conrad's *Under Western Eyes*. When I returned to the cell I found that my fellow inmates had been blessed with visitors who had brought the small allowance of alcohol. We drank our own that day but agreed for the future that one of us would drink all three portions every three days and get drunk. When it was the cockney's turn to get pissed he spoke a poem from memory that he'd composed on a previous stay about how the cell's narrow walls had seen so much and so many.

After a time on remand in that shit-pit a compassionate friend, Barry Hanson, managed to raise the enormous bail by persuading a dozen writers of his acquaintance to pool in for half of it while the mercurial accountant to the stars, Michael Henshaw, stood up for the rest. The conditions of my bail were to surrender my passport and sign on at the Edgware Road police station twice a day—which made any trip out of London impossible. After a while I'd sign my name in different coloured inks to relive the boredom. At Christmas the courts gave permission to visit my old mother and the kids back in Newcastle provided I sign-on twice a day at the police station there. My widowed mother was seventy-eight, living alone in her council house. She was in fact my maternal great aunt and had adopted me at the age of nine months and changed my name in the process from McKenna to Pickard. We sat at her hearth and I told her that I was in trouble, that I may go to jail, and that I was sorry to bring shame to her doorstep. She took it better than I thought and brightened up when I told her of Joanna in Warsaw.
'She's welcome here, tell her.'

— The old bailey —

In the year leading up to the trial I sold off most of my possessions, including a first edition of Oscar Wilde's *Salome* with Beardsley illustrations and a few other treasures acquired over a decade of book dealing and scouring junk shops and out of the way auction rooms. My friend, the poet Ken Smith, made a badge which said 'Tom Pickard is almost innocent', which was quite accurate but grim comfort. The night before the trial a drunken friend gave herself to me but I was too pissed and strung out to fuck so she blew me on the spiral stone steps of my Regent's Park Nash squat. With a hangover I entered the Central Criminal Court to surrender my bail and was taken down into the holding cells to wait for the trial to begin. Jack and I were banged up there with a bunch of guys from the East End accused of gang warfare over ice-cream wagons in the West End. They were curious about the developing drug scene and offered me a job with them when I got out. We were called up into the court and I sat next to Costos whom I'd not seen since Brixton prison and he talked about Cyprus and why he could never return. He had fallen in love and made pregnant the daughter of a powerful boss and wanted to marry her. Walking in the hills one day they noticed a priest running towards them looking purposeful but dishevelled and when he pulled a gun Costos ran, dodging the bullets. He went into hiding for a week, took a boat to Turkey where, after a month or so got arrested but broke out of jail and escaped to England. There was another Greek Cypriot in the dock, too, whom Jack named after a comic book character, Torpedo Tony, because he was armed and edgy—with a bullet shaped head. When his barrister asked for a Greek interpreter the judge agreed saying 'are we going to need one for the Geordies?' Joanna managed to get a short visa and came to stay with me for the second week of the trial and I would try to keep her entertained by getting a guard to pass notes, which he did until ordered to cease. The notes said 'see you in BUDAPEST!' or just 'BUDAPEST.' It's difficult to maintain a courtship from the dock. The prosecutor had a thin hatchet face and whenever my name was mentioned from the witness box he would turn to look at me with a sallow grin. On the morning of my cross examination we all stood in the corridor outside of the court room waiting for the doors to be opened, when the prosecutor entered wearing wig and gown. As he approached he smiled and spoke directly, with deliberate and considered courtesy, to me.

'Good morning,' as though I were the morsel he was to have for breakfast.

Before my brain could catch up with my mouth I replied with equal courtesy.

'Good morning. Have you been sharpening your teeth all night?'

His cross-examination was conducted with icy vigour. My hopeless defence was based on ignorance of the crime. It was such a shaky base that my legs weakened and I asked the judge if I could sit in the witness box, which he allowed.

The prosecutor presented apparently irrefutable evidence of my criminal involvement.

'Would you look at this photograph Mr Pickard.' A copy of the same document was passed to the jury. It was an undercover picture of my friend and me removing boxes from a van outside of his basement flat in Victoria.

'Is that Mr Blackburn?' the prosecutor asked me.

'It looks like him.'

'And is that you helping him?'

'It could be.'

'But you admit that you were packing boxes?'

'Yes, he bought a lot of books.'

'Oh, you are a book dealer, are you?'

'Yes.'

'I see. What books did your friend buy?'

'All sorts. Victorian a lot of them.'

'Victorian? Such as?'

'Well, The Strand Magazine.'



'That is not Victorian', the judge interrupted, 'that is Edwardian. I used to read them as a lad and would not like to think of myself as a Victorian. The Strand was Georgian.'

'Well,' I spluttered, 'they used to publish Rider Haggard, and he was a Victorian.'

'Perhaps he was both', the judge continued, 'and of course Conan Doyle—he also straddled the reigns of Victoria and George 5th.'

The prosecutor patiently waited for the bench to finish.

'If you had known that your friend was importing large quantities of marijuana would you have informed the police?'

I appealed to the judge, complaining that it was a hypothetical question, but he insisted on an answer. This was the most difficult question so far, possibly because I hadn't seen it coming and couldn't see a way out of it—I was being invited to add a lie to the pile of half-truths that lay strewn at my feet. My friend was pleading guilty and was not in court. I hesitated—we were born in the same month of the same year and in the same street, we had been truants together, been in the same street gangs, taken our first illicit taste of alcohol and smoke together. Since moving to London he had fed me when I was skint, listened for long nights to my misery at being separated from the kids, kept me in drinks and smokes, and had given me a floor to sleep on in his cold damp basement flat that had been a hole in the wall for many Geordie friends on the run from the law. And when we were under arrest, during the long interrogation, the senior investigator said to me, 'he'd trust you with his life, wouldn't he?' I had never thought of it before. To admit it would compound my guilt and confirm his suspicion of my involvement but I did not deny it. At the trial I replied to the prosecutor, 'Yes, I'd report him if I'd known.' My friend would understand but I felt terrible shame for saying it and could hardly look the jury in the eye. Some days before, during the prosecution case while a Customs officer was giving testimony, the judge was passed a note from the foreman of the jury who was I think, a Geordie chippy. The judge stopped the cross examination of the officer.

I have been passed a note from the foreman of the jurors who asks, "Why is the chief Custom's officer nodding and winking to the officer in the witness box?" I am sure that he is not acting improperly but I felt that I ought to air the concern of the jury and address it.'

So the jury was clearly ready to listen with an open mind, and might even be inclined to give the benefit of the doubt. Sometimes when I reflect on the trial or recollect it for someone I catch myself referring to the jury as 'the audience'. Perhaps it was a performer's instinct, but I knew that I had given the wrong answer and after what seemed a long while and following a further few penetrating and discomfiting enquiries I interrupted the prosecutor.

'On reflection, and regarding an earlier question, I'd have to say that I wouldn't inform on my friend if I'd known he was smuggling dope.' He scored many points after that and I thought my case lost but felt better for putting on the public record that I wasn't a grass. Perhaps that bit of honesty at least helped me out of the corner that the prosecutor had so easily boxed me into. At the end of my long cross examination, it lasted a day and a half, I shakily resumed my seat next to Costos while witnesses to my previous good character were drummed in. Amongst others, Eric Mottram and Lindsay Anderson spoke eloquently but the prosecutor ignored them until my final witness, Basil Bunting, took the witness stand. *Ex Wing Commander Bunting*. All that my friends could say was that I'd been honest in my dealings and that I was a decent poet, which, as the judge later pointed out in his summing up, bore no relevance to my guilt or innocence and reminded the jury of the 15th c French poet who was also a famous criminal.

'Who's that?' whispered Costos.

Francois Villon. My mate translated him when he was in jail for being a conchy in the First world War.



Mine was a three plank bed whereon
I lay and cursed the weary sun.
They took away the prison clothes
and on the frosty nights I froze.
I had a bible where I read
that Jesus came to raise the dead--
I kept myself from going mad
by singing an old bawdy ballad'

Bunting was seventy-seven years old and had served in the RAF and in intelligence during WW2. He'd also temporally been a diplomat, a visiting professor, looked the world directly in the eye and had a dignified gait. The old poet had come from Northumberland to speak at the trial but he had written a series of letters during the year to prepare me for the worst. In response to my suggestion that I could use the imprisonment to do some writing, he responded with an account of his time in Windsor jail.

'If you get locked up I do not think they would let you write,—this is not America. I know our gaols have been reformed, but not, I think, that much. In 1918, all the writing even the most privileged were allowed to do was confined to a slate. When you had filled the slate you wiped it off and started again. Most of us didn't even

have a slate. You were allowed to receive one letter and write one, as much as you could get onto one very small sheet of notepaper, every month after the first three, which were blank, provided you broke no rules meanwhile. You were allowed to talk, an hour a day, after the first two years, which were silent. No doubt all that has changed, but I do not think that it has been made what you and I would consider civilised...but even now I know that you are not allowed to describe a prison or what goes on in it—no diary or description in letters – nor to take any writing out of prison until it has been passed by the authorities. You have to save it all up in your head. The difficulty would be to avoid becoming embittered, for rant about the hardship does no good at all and can narrow and cripple your own mind.'

And in another letter he sought to encourage me.

'Hardship and humiliation, though severe, didn't give me any cause for despair. Yet I was a boy, eighteen, with nothing I could look back on to bolster my self esteem or my courage. You have solid accomplishment to stiffen you....You can endure whatever they are likely to inflict on you, and it won't last for ever. It need not embitter you, let alone demolish you. Afterwards, freedom, with a deepened experience and perhaps a more accurate measure of yourself; and no less pride, though perhaps a less truculent pride.'

Then a few days before the trial began a more rueful note.

'It may be that this is the last chance I'll have of addressing you before the verdict. What I chiefly want to say is that conviction and imprisonment would not be the end of your career by any means, nor would it alienate your friends. Prison is hard to bear, but it is not unbearable, and if you want to keep your eyes open to what is around you (as I'm pretty sure you will) you'll pile up a stock of experience you can make good use of in poetry eventually. Keep objective. Your own unhappiness is not capital stock, but what your eyes see and your ears hear is...I quite expect neither to hear from you nor to be able to write to you if you are sentenced. You'll need your letters for more intimate folk, children, ex-wife, girl, etc. Bearing my age in mind, I may not be around if you are released after a long time; so let me say now that I have always admired your courage against odds, your readiness to learn whatever there was to learn, your goodwill even to people who have earned no goodwill; and I value your ear for rhythm, your readiness to cut down to what's essential, the way you evoke an emotion without a word that isn't concrete and factual.'

Bunting was someone the jury clearly felt comfortable with, which may be why the prosecutor rose to ask a question just as the old gentleman picked up his walking stick and was about to be helped from the witness box.

'Wing Commander Bunting, would you still think so highly of Mr Pickard if you knew that he took drugs?'

He smiled benignly and without a moment's hesitation replied.

'I would be surprised if a man of his generation didn't.'

As Bunting walked out of court Costos said, as much to himself as to those in earshot:

'What a fucking beautiful old man.'

Jack and Spud pleaded guilty and were sentenced to eight years. There was a hung jury for Costos and he was committed to a retrial but he almost immediately skipped bail and the last I heard he'd been killed pulling a stroke. I was found not guilty by a majority verdict.

One week later Lindsay Anderson lent me the money to buy an airline ticket to Warsaw and we flew there together—he to show his films and lecture and I to meet the woman who had waited a year for my return. We cleared customs and immigration control and once out into the airport, a short taxi-ride from my lover and a long way from a year of sweated fear, I took a deep breath, opened my arms and said, with a touch of irony: 'ah, freedom.' 'Dear boy,' Lindsay chided, 'you never know who's listening.'



Illustrations by Melinda Gebbie / coloured by Hoax





WORLD OF ILLUZION

By Lejorne Pindling

Before I start the body of my article, I would like to just say that this is a true story, I felt it extraordinary and I had to draw it to your attention. It is something you would do well to be wary of as you may find yourself under attack in the near future from this new breed of canine. However before you can truly understand what we may be facing, I need to give you the full details of what led me to discover this threat.

The situation arose several days ago when I was on my way home from another long and arduous day at work. I work in the relatively new lands of Milton Keynes, where the (American) road grid system is in place. I happened to be walking on a "red-way" (a pro-feature of the grid system – keeps pedestrians off of busy roads) on my way to the station, alongside a river surrounded by grass, so the area carries off a little park effect. As usual I was deeply engrossed in music, but was quick to spot a smallish white dog (Border Collie) bouncing happily about in the grass. I could see the owner not far off, who was a Caucasian man in his mid 40's, wearing sports-wear. I do this walk most days and walk past dogs and owners most days without incident, so I continued as normal. I was then very quickly aware that this little dog had come trotting (if you can describe a dog as trotting) over to me. It looked up at me with a somewhat inquisitive look on its face, so as I'm sure a natural reaction for most people, I stooped slightly and stroked the dog behind the ears.

10-15 seconds later, I, and my new momentary companion were joined by who I had presumed was the owner, who had an astounded look on his face and he sparked up conversation in a surprised tone.

"Y'alright mate?" he asked. I suppose it was ok for him to strike up conversation (you see my mum told me never to talk to strangers considering that I was stroking his dog which was now lovingly rubbing the side of its head against my knee, while I tickled its scalp.

"Not bad, nice dog, he is really nice." was my reply and I was content to leave it at that, however I realised that the dog's owner had more to say as he drew breath and continued.

"It's really surprising that he's let you stroke 'im..."

"Really, he seems really ok?" said I in a questioning tone, which effectively called for an explanation.

"Yeah," he replied with assurance in his voice, "he doesn't normally like blacks or Asians," he continued, "whenever he sees blacks, he normally barks at them and goes really crazy, sometimes it's a job to calm him down!"

Then it hit me, as the fear washed over me, I realised that I was facing the very real fact, that I had come into contact with (to me) the world's first "Racist Dog". This evil specimen of ruthless Border-Collie, I could now see was dangerous, sly and a detriment to ethnic people's racial plight, with the clear and obvious racial views it was displaying whilst licking my hand.

If I'm honest, I had no idea how to respond to the owner and looked him frankly in the eye for validity in the comments he had made, and from what I could pick up, he was being sincere. I chose (wisely I'd say) not to continue our conversation and burst out into strangled laughter as I walked away. I mean considering some of the things I have heard about racial abuse from the past, my "attack" seemed to pale in comparison, as I have to admit that I felt no fear, or evil feelings from the Border-Collie when I was stroking him.

HOWEVER, as I continued my walk, my mind was running mental images of large groups of dogs standing proud, crisp white sheets over their heads, with pointy ears sticking up. Tongues hanging out flicking venomous racial insults around like dribbling saliva, as they panted heavily.

Moments later I let the (quite frightening) illusion slip from my mind, chose not to dwell in the world of the "Ku Klux Kanines" and made my way home without further incident.

As is clear I am a survivor of this horrific event, and just wanted to warn everyone of this extreme threat. There may be a racist dog licking its lips tantalizingly at you now. However, I managed to survive and so will you!! We must have HOPE!!

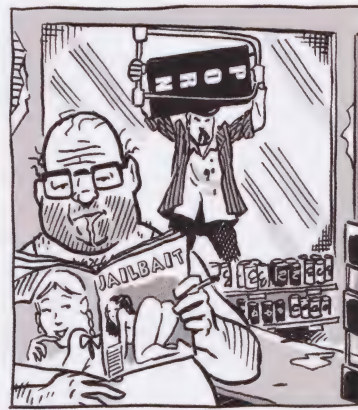


Bwoken Bwitaip

Once it was like this



But now



Meanwhile, way back when





How to Survive the Collapse of Civilization

by Margaret Killjoy

The first thing to know about surviving the apocalypse is this: **you're not going to survive the apocalypse.** You're not special. If everyone dies? That includes you. If the ecological crisis that triggers the collapse (my money is on runaway global warming, personally) doesn't get you, then the further militarization of our society probably will.

If you want to survive, and I cannot express this strongly enough, *you should not go run and hide in your little isolated cabin somewhere by yourself or with five of your friends!* (Unless there are zombies.) If you simply retreat and wait for the world to right itself, you're a coward and not even a very bright one; if you leave all of the work to other people, things aren't going to come out so pretty. It is this sort of cowardice, this individualistic gusto, that arguably got us into this trouble in the first place. If you stand idly by and watch a fascistic army take control, you will, in the end, die. If you don't try to organize with people to kickstart a permacultured agriculture to feed people, you will, in the end, die. If you live with two other people and never see another living soul again in your life? You might survive, but you might very well wish you hadn't. When your appendix ruptures and whoops you forgot that your brother isn't a surgeon? You will die.

Like it or not, humans are social animals. Our best hope to stay alive, and furthermore, to thrive, after an apocalyptic event is to discover social solutions. Staying in settled areas can be dangerous too, of course. Hunger does monstrous things to people. But in most apocalyptic literature there's this assumption that everyone else will join "roving gangs" that pillage the survivors. This will only happen if we let it. We've been told by civilization, with its specialized class of rulers and politicians, that we can't organize ourselves. This is nonsense. Organization isn't something that we simply get placed into without willing it. Power isn't something that simply gets used against us. Power is something that we all have, as individuals and most importantly as groups. something that simply gets used against us. Power is something that we all have, as individuals and most importantly

as groups. For example, there's no reason we can't form roving gangs that travel around and teach permaculture, medical, and post-civilization organization the survivors instead.

There's no reason we can't organize with our neighbors, pool what resources we're willing to share, and begin immediately to grow food, develop a shared culture, and defend ourselves against the people who try to take it away from us.

And who knows? Maybe industrial civilization will collapse before we hit chain-reaction levels of carbon release. Maybe peak oil will save us from obliterating most all life on earth. Or maybe enough people will wisen up and begin to actively dismantle the industrial civilization that is killing us as surely as an axe might. What then?

Two things: rewilding and community rescue.

Rewilding

Rewilding is the process of turning what is domesticated back into something that is wild. The first thing, the very first thing that honestly we should be doing right now, regardless of law, is tearing up pavement and helping the forest return. Some road infrastructure might come in handy, of course, but there is plenty of space that quite obviously—to the post-civilized—would be better left feral. And every road carved through the forest in essence cuts the forest into two distinct areas. This is most easily observed by getting out of your car and walking a few meters into the trees; only the outside of a healthy forest is a tangled thicket. The inside is quite roomy.

Nature will reclaim territory at its own pace, but in some areas it makes sense to help it along. Desertification is real and it's scary and it's something that humanity has been doing for millennia before the industrial revolution. Even with careful replanting, tree farms often last only a few cycles before the soil is too depleted to sustain life. The more that science learns about forest ecology, the more we learn that we're better off leaving forests to fend for themselves.





I would argue, and I'm not alone, that global reforestation at a rapid pace is one of the only chances we have of preventing our climate from going completely out of control. But mostly, we need to let the wilderness encroach back towards us for its own sake. Anthropocentric ideas—that is, ideas that take humanity and its "needs" as an absolute priority—are another of the many elements that led us down this foolish road we've called civilization. It's astounding, this haughtiness that has allowed humanity to see nature as so inconsequential that we permit coal companies to literally level entire mountain ranges (see mountaintop removal coal-mining in the Appalachian mountains). The fact that we don't rise in anger against such monstrous acts shows just how domesticated, how tame we've become.

As much as we need to rewild huge tracts of the earth, we need to rewild most everything within ourselves.

Community Rescue

After the collapse, much of the infrastructure of our global society will of course have fallen. And those in power will try their hardest to stay in power. But if we organize for ourselves and our communities, the existing governmental and corporate structures may be simply rendered obsolete.

Humans, by nature (yes, yes, we can argue forever about what is and isn't human nature, but this is my column) work together in times of crisis. When things go wrong, the status quo of isolation is suspended. This is easily observed by waiting for the bus: you stand and wait and no one speaks with anyone else. But as soon as the bus is ten minutes late, everyone is friends.

When Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans in 2005, people organized collectively to loot food. The government showed up a few days later and started shooting people. And the bureaucratic aid organizations were so bloated and inefficient that some members days later and started shooting people. And the bureaucratic aid organizations were so bloated and inefficient

that some members of the National Guard, their humanity showing through their uniform, smuggled supplies to the anarchist Common Ground Collective. They did it because they knew that the anarchists would actually get medicine to where it was needed.

People always talk about how without the government we'd all just kill one another, but most often the only killing that happens in a crisis is done by the government as it aims to maintain law and order, the civilized status quo, at all costs. (The next bogeyman strawman that anti-anarchists will pull out is Somalia, but Somalia doesn't lack for governments; it's full of warlords.)

So our role is simply to help these organic communities foster, the same as we might help forests retake Walmart parking lots. We need to organize in our local areas to meet people's needs: food, water, shelter, medical care, and culture. And we'll need to fight against the remnants of civilization as it tries to reassert its might.

Most survival guides focus on the nuts and bolts of individual survival: how to filter your water, how to store food, how to construct shelters out of whatever one might find. These books are useful, and it's worth keeping a few around.

A lot of my friends keep what some people call "oh shit gear," or OSG for short. Water purification systems, canned food, topographic maps of the area. Medical kits, with an emphasis on antibiotics and any prescription medicines one might need. Spare eyeglasses. Gas masks and air filters. Protective clothing. These things are worth having around.

At least one group, the Aftershock Action Alliance of New York City, is doing community, grassroots disaster preparedness. They work with their neighbors to develop plans of how the neighborhood can work together to survive catastrophe. They teach workshops on community rescue.

It's only on the social scale that we can defend ourselves from famine, illness, and warlords. And it's there that we need to focus.





Skateboarding

IS NOT A CRIME

by David Underwood

A skateboard is a H.P.V. (Human Powered Vehicle) small enough to be easily put into a bag and carried onto any other form of transport, easy to maintain with few moving parts. Not much more than a plank of wood with a wheel on each corner, a very simple object at the centre of a whole subculture.

Previous to the invention of the Polyurethane wheel and the beginning of mass production in the mid seventies, Skateboards were usually a handmade affair, fixing a roller skate broken in two onto a plank of wood. These boards had wood, metal or clay wheels, not very smooth or durable. This was first done by surfers trying to emulate the feeling of riding waves, hence the phrase 'pavement surfing'.

With the urethane wheel came more popularity, competitions and a boom time. Riders started to become professional and companies sprung up offering all sorts of new and quite often ridiculous inventions – for example, a Rolls Royce skateboard with a radiator grill and working lights appeared on Blue Peter. This momentum was fuelled by the emergence of the first magazines, the main one being 'Skateboarder'.

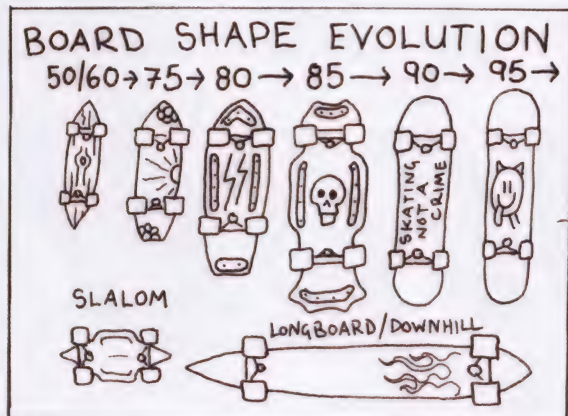
All the early mass produced equipment that came from the U.S.A. had surf inspired graphics, things like tropical flowers and sunsets, emphasising the link between the two. By about '78 things took a new turn towards more of a punk rock attitude. By this time, skating had advanced towards vertical riding in empty back yard swimming pools (in California mostly) or purpose built skate-parks, taking riders into the air and upside down. This is when it found its own strength and identity separate from surfing.

As the eighties came in the initial craze had worn off as these things tend to do. The backlash was that being seen with a skateboard was unfashionable, and a thing that children did. If you were 'grown up' and seen about the streets with a board people would want to know why you were playing with a 'kid's toy'. Facilities (skate-parks) that were provided though the craze years either disappeared or were left to ruin. Skateboarding went underground, spurred on by the two main magazines from America - 'Thrasher' and 'Transworld' as well as many small circulation fanzines. There was also an emerging social and music scene inspired by bands who mentioned skating in their lyrics or had band members who skated, bands like Minor Threat, Fugazi and Black Flag. Boards and trucks (which attach the wheels to the deck) were also getting progressively wider, and adorned with punk rock, tattoo style graphics (lots of skulls).

During the tail end of the eighties things were picking up again. The companies that survived the quiet years were the ones that maintained their integrity and loyalty to the skaters, by putting back into the scene, organising contests and events, and sponsoring riders. The magazines were full of vertical riding - huge half-pipes and huge air-based tricks. At this point boards reached their widest and were an array of shapes, each one claiming advantages over its competitors.

As the nineties came in, the emphasis changed towards street skating. Not everyone had a huge half-pipe or skate-park on their doorstep, so the streets were more accessible. Street skating was revolutionised by the street ollie (jumping up curbs without touching the board with your hands). The fashion changed, reflecting the music and culture surrounding the scene, with it continually being influenced by what was happening in the street. Hip Hop and other urban music were adding

to the mix. Boards got narrower with a kick (the kink in the deck) on the nose as well as the tail. Wheels got smaller, ridiculously so at one point, and harder – good for smooth skate-parks or tricks with a short run up but no good for bombing hills or rough pavement surfaces (even skating is a victim of the impracticalities of fashion). From there on, new skate-parks started to emerge, such as Radlands in Northampton. More magazines, contests, and expos occurred – with the emergence of accessible digital technology came more skater-made films and music, along with mainstream media coverage. Boards reached an optimum shape (within certain dimensions) which most are now, save for specialist ones such as longboards for downhill racing or slalom boards for turning tight through cones.



Most people attempting to ride a skate board for the first time properly (not pissed at a party in the kitchen) would place their front foot above but not in front of the front truck on the deck, wheels down on a large smooth level-ish paved surface. Right foot first is called goofy, left first natural or regular. You need to work out which stance feels most stable before you start. Then you shunt! - Push in a scooting motion with the back foot, once some speed has been gained, place the back foot behind the front on the deck towards the tail. Bend your knees and lean forward (at this stage never lean backwards towards the tail). If you are rolling along you may lean towards your heels (frontside) or toes (backside) to change direction. To stop, drag your back foot on the ground until you slow enough to step off the board. This is the basic principle - add hills, curved transition, plus gravity and this leads to a whole new world of rolling possibilities.

When you try an activity like skateboarding - where you are pushing your own personal physical limits – warm up and stretch first. Wearing a helmet, knee and elbow pads and wrist guards is a very good idea. Apart from falling off, the other main drawbacks are having to walk uphill, uneven or rough pavement surfaces and rain. Rain is dangerous on a board. It makes for no sideways grip, destroys grip-tape, rusts bearings and generally puts a stop to the fun.

Skateboarding as a sport/art/hobby/lifestyle has the option to be non-competitive (no winners or losers) - the idea being as you become more competent the better it feels - the faster you go, the more the thrill. As long as you are reasonably fit, the size and strength of a person is irrelevant. It is more to do with technique and the light footed manipulation of the board to encourage it to go just where you want – like anything practice makes perfect. Your main limitation is yourself, how fast dare you go? It's important to learn about the abilities you have, because misjudgement may lead to pain. This is another principle involved – the pleasure-pain paradox. This leads to having to find a level of concentration at speed through a sequence of movements, taking it to as close to the edge as you dare. In that moment, not worrying about the mundane, workaday, boring have-to-do shit or the future or the past – purely in that moment of speed and weightlessness, you are desperately trying not to fall and feel possible pain. Coming through the other side is like the feeling of walking

away from an accident unhurt, fear mixed with adrenaline.

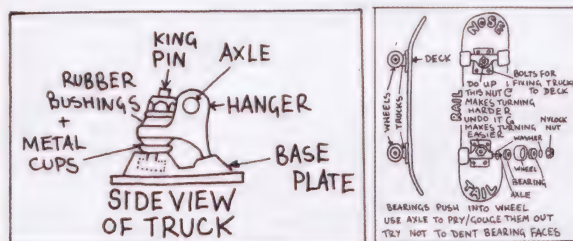
This makes for a great way of releasing built-up stress and anger and channelling aggression into a creative outlet, which improves your strength, balance and stamina. When put into a controlled environment like a skate-park, it's one small solution to the angry youth problem.

Apart from the functional side of skating, there are no rules - it is purely about fun, and skating for skating's sake. Going backwards and forwards across the same piece of pavement or half-pipe or round and round the same bowl at the skate-park repetitively, like a lab rat pacing the boundaries of its container. Learning new tricks opens up new possibilities, and their names become a new language. With this in mind the best skater on any given day is the one having the most fun.



When travelling through your own or a new urban environment, skating is a good way of exploring and taking things in, seeing the world from pavement level, and taking advantage of modern architecture. Endless pavements, roads, curbs and hills - an environment provided for us, with us having little input or choice in the matter. Something creative and constructive coming from the mundane and everyday.

Rolling about, a map starts to build in your head, with details of the rideable surfaces of every street you pass along. Through a skater's eyes a mundane building, some steps with a hand rail, is somewhere to creatively spend time playing and having fun. Skateboarding can change your vision of the urban physical landscape from somewhere to be endured to somewhere to exploit and enjoy.



The skateboarding industry has gone from strength to strength, with Tony Hawk now a household name, the console games and other media promoting the second hand experience. In the rein of D.I.Y. Culture, much of the industry is skater owned and skater run, leading to it controlling its own future to a degree. The media has always been happy to use skating as a "Cool" marketable image to advertise anything from fruit to cars – they take what they want and always get it wrong. They are happy to make money from it and at the same time don't care about spreading misinformation and fear among the populace, of portraying skaters as being anti-social (instant criminal - just add skateboard). This has led to harassment and arrests. Skateboarding is not a crime. A lack of facilities (skate-parks) encourages street skating and as a result there is more chance of us crossing the public's path. We could really do with more permanent (concrete) free facilities. This would encourage a scene and an economy of its own. In this age of obesity and pollution/climate change, with enough space to avoid other pedestrians, a skateboard could prove to be another small solution to commuting small distances or running short errands. This in turn would encourage people and provide them with a more creative way to spend their time.

BY JOSEPHINE ISABEL
LONG (28½)

MY STUPID OPINIONS!

WOW! LOOK AT THAT
TYPESETTING!
ARE YOU A PROFESSIONAL
GRAPHIC
DESIGNER?

MY HUSBAND
WAS BEING
SARCASTIC,
BY
THE
WAY



HI. It's such a treat to
be writing something again for Dodgem Logic.
I am Josie and these are some opinions I have which I
am aware are ridiculous...

OPINION:



People who own, but
especially
people who carry
umbrellas "just in case"
are squares who overprepare

ANALYSIS:



J.I.L
I am
so desperately
cold and
soaked.

OPINION:

I would be really
hard in a fight, if it came down
to it.

ANALYSIS:

overconfident at best.
worryingly belligerent.
I don't even like violence -
I think this comes from
the fact that I do
like roughhousing &
horseplay. Also a big
fan of Boxercise.

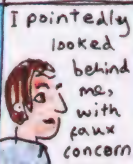


strong
legs
most
work

The closest I've even come to a
fight recently was on a train,
going to Sutton in Dec. 2008.



FOR SOME REASON, I WAS PISSING
THEM OFF. THEY STARED AND
STARED AT ME, MORE
AND MORE
THREAT-
ENINGLY.
I WAS
VERY
SCARED.



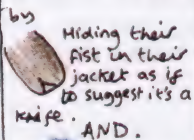
What could
possibly
be going
on?

Then, as I stepped
off the train, I couldn't
help but say:



JAZZ
HANDS
IN A STRONGER THAN
USUAL ESTUARY ACCENT!
They ran at the door,
shouting, but it was too late.

ONCE SOMEONE
INTIMIDATED ME
ENOUGH TO ROB ME



AND.
Doing a
false,
heavy stamp-step,
as you would
to scare a pigeon.

OPINION:

VERY THIN WOMEN
ARE UNTRUSTWORTHY.

ANALYSIS:

THIS IS PROBABLY UNFAIR.

OPINION:

Jane Austen is
shit!

ANALYSIS:

I stand by this.

OPINION:



I am
more than
a little
bit psychic

I don't
even
believe
in
psychic
phenomena!
But still
deeply believe it.

mick Jagger is a
really creepy
old pervert.

OPINION:

GOING INTO CHAIN
RESTAURANTS AND BARS
WILL SOMEHOW DESTROY
YOUR SOUL.

How dare
you tell me
how to spend my
time.



OPINION:



I'm one of those
people who don't
have to bother
with moisturiser/
beauty products.

ANALYSIS:

Buckle up because I
expect that by 40 I'll
be one hell of a sight! BUT...

* attn reader: I do not believe
in souls.

OPINION: The following things are
shit boring:



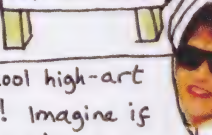
These
magazines
are BAD
FOR YOU!
Don't encourage
them.
Read a book.
A proper book. (or



I COULD
HAVE BEEN
A MEDICAL
DOCTOR, OR
A HEART
SURGEON, TO
BE SPECIFIC.

ANALYSIS:
NO.

THERE IS A
MAINSTREAM
AUDIENCE FOR
MY COMEDY.



ANALYSIS: I am just so sick and tired of
gendered culture, especially the raw deal
that women get.



YOU NEED A BAG BIG ENOUGH
FOR AN A4 PAD. YOU
NEED TO CARRY BOOKS!
AND BE ABLE TO RUN...

YOU NEED TO BE ABLE
TO RUN, JUMP OR CLIMB
AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE,
AND SO YOUR SHOES
SHOULD REFLECT THIS =
DON'T DENY YOURSELF ADVENTURE!

I know it seems like
I'm moaning. But you get so
beaten down that, like Smog says.

I SHOULD DO
BOXING.
Basically, one week
at boxercise, Kris
the teacher said
"well done".
(SEE: Fighting etc).

JUST FOR GENTS: Hip cool high-art
is still so male-skewed! Imagine if
80% of what you liked had women
leads, best characters, protagonists and
men were only tokenly put in as love
interests. It'd tire you out and alienate
you, too. I seek only balance here.

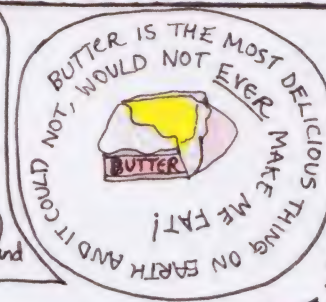
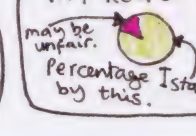
OPINION:
I'D BE ALL RIGHT IN THE
EVENT OF THE APOCALYPSE.

YOU KNOW I HAD TO YELL, JUST TO GET MY VOICE BACK!

"DON'T LOOK BACK IN
ANGER" IS ONE OF THE
WORST SONGS OF ALL
TIME. THAT WHOLE ALBUM IS
WHACK.



IF YOU BUY
AND READ
THE SUN
YOU DO NOT
DESERVE
MY RESPECT



Stay **MS** and keep your own
name.
Children can have their own
new name. Or both names.
The system is sexist & must
change! We must change it!

I·M·H·O!

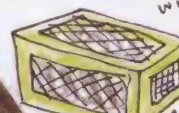
I mentioned this on twitter recently and people
LOST THEIR MINDS WITH FURY AT ME.
It's so odd. If somebody said to me:



moving in with
someone before
marriage is
idiotic.



OR...
women comedians
are all really
unhappy! being a
stand-up is shit!



Trying to reason
with people over
the internet
is like hitting
then opening
a box of bees.
A box of bees that
already hate you.

* I deliberately made
the writing get smaller
as she was
embarrassed to swear.

UNIVERSITY
EDUCATION
SHOULD BE FREE!

REDISTRIBUTION OF
WEALTH! HIGHER
TAXES FOR THE RICH!

I LOVE IMMIGRATION!
I SUPPORT TAKING IN
ASYLUM SEEKERS & REFUGEES

MORE LEGISLATION
TO FORCE US TO
CUT EMISSIONS.

Which
direction is
the wind
even coming
from?



That's not
a metaphor.
The flags.

I HATE TORIES
4 EVA. &

ABut I also like
everyone.

I would happily disagree, I wouldn't flip out.
You can feel a decision is made grudgingly or under
duress by how quickly someone tries to shout you
down over it.

love, **Josie Long** x

**SMASH
ENTRENCHED
PRIVILEGE**
Now you're getting
the hang of it!



Also these
pages have
far too much
writing on
them.
Uip. spoke too soon!

DO NOT APOLOGISE FOR IDEALISM OR A DESIRE FOR FAIRNESS OR KINDNESS!



BLOWN BY THE WIND

As the field of animation with its painstaking technique and sheer old-fashioned dedication says 'Th-th-that's all, folks' and is washed away by a hallucinatory torrent of computer generated imagery, Dodgem Logic's stop-motion siren Melinda Gebbie reminisces about her time in a disappearing industry, working long into those scary Cold War nights on Raymond Brigg's apocalyptic *When the Wind Blows*...

Borne on the tightly-clenched tail-feathers of my armchair anarchist Englishman, I entered the U.K., unknowingly for the foreseeable future, although something had made me pack all my jewellery when I fled San Francisco for six months respite in Cambridge, that self-enclosed bubble of learning and privilege.

I longed to put my art to use. Walks in the countryside and charades at family weekends were getting on my wick. Dinner table discussions with puns in ancient Greek from local professors, where I was ignored because I hadn't been introduced, were also becoming samey. But my privately-tutored guy seemed intent upon thrusting me into the family-scape – so much so that he suggested we marry in order to get Social Services to help support us. So we married.

One visit to the architect-designed family pile was enough to insult the Socce's sensibilities. We were not in need. I wanted work. We ventured to Soho in London and I had an immediate epiphany – it truly seemed to contain a golden square. In a voice that seemed to come as from a dream I announced I wanted to work every day here, among these shops, around this tiny central garden with its Tudoresque toy houses. It all beckoned.

Hubby went back to his job in San Francisco – anarchist poet working on the Stock Exchange – hmmm. Drawn like a magnet, I hung out in a lunch spot on Denmark Street just soaking up the mysterious gold of it. A conversation behind, at a table, floated up to me:

"Yes, I know. The Raymond Briggs book. They're taking on talent right now. It'll be a hard subject. They're bringing in animators from Canada and Australia for it."

I knew instantly what they were talking about. My father-in-law had been head of CND in Cambridge and *When the Wind Blows* had struck me like a hammer when I'd read it, disturbing my sleep, bringing up fears of radioactive fallout that I'd put away since the dreadful weeks of the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1963. It had made me cry as well, and in a rush I scurried to their table to interrupt their meal.

"Excuse me, are they hiring people to animate *When the Wind Blows*?"

"Yes. At TVC over on Charlotte Street. They're actually past deadline on it. It's a bit of a mess, really."

I paid my bill and walked there, past Channel Four, along busy but pleasantly neighbourhoody series of streets.

After application by note, card, letter and phone-call, I finally got an interview with the head of Paint & Trace. My only experience had been hand-tinting black and white photos for a tiny animation company in San Francisco, but I knew I would get this job. I'd been involved with anti-nuclear newspapers and protests both in S.F. and Britain...visiting Molesworth here; illustrating articles about radioactive leakage in San Francisco Bay waters and the multi-armed starfish it had produced; the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant in California that had been partially erected from an upside-down blueprint, right on the San Andreas fault... I was ready to camp on TVC's doorstep, if need be.



I was hired to troubleshoot a technical problem. It seems millions had been spent already and the film was not even properly begun. They were now in countdown phase and the budget was negligible. To the point where they couldn't afford frosted cels – we would have to use liquid PVC on the characters themselves, and find a simple way to render, or carefully blend, the rouge on their cheeks.

There was no time to draw the background living space of Jimmy and Hilda's home. A set was built that could be photographed from multiple angles, which would free the fifteen-strong rendering department to work on the most devastating part of the film – the annihilation of the English countryside. The rendering department got all the frosted cels, for they would need to cover them in constantly changing detail. We were working in the heat of a sweltering summer and had to use soft black lead pencils which melted, so they had to be kept in a small fridge or carried in an ice-filled box. The company supplying them discontinued the lead, as it was considered hazardous, so we were issued pencil holders to use the things down to a stub before being given two new ones each.

After a few weeks, I wanted out of Paint & Trace. My boss was an ex-football hooligan from a prosperous family who bragged about his white-on-white house and I believed my talent was worth more than a simple repetition of a simple line from blue pencil on paper to black lead on cel. "Fine. Go to Rendering and ask them to take you on. But if they don't take you on, you're finished here." I daren't take the chance, although I longed to spend endless hours sketching a progression of roiling smoke, crashing cars and exploding houses, along with the other 'real' artists of the film.

I went upstairs and quietly asked the stars of the company, the key animators, if I could have a go at drawing a key scene. This is how it works: imagine an animated sequence as being like a clock. The key animator draws the sequence of movements – say a man at a bar, lifting a glass of beer. At twenty four frames per second, you break down the clock face to twenty-four sections, or, as is normally done, at twelve points. He (or much more rarely she) draws the stages of movement at noon, three, six and nine. The in-betweeners, using a light-box, trace the movement in time down from one P.M. to two, then from four to five, seven to eight and finally ten to eleven.

It was audacious and simply not done for me to try and progress in this way, literally running from one department to the next, asking for better work. Animation companies hired you to one slot and you were meant to know your place and stay put. I was getting a reputation as a non-conformist. The woman who tossed a sequence at me was Canadian, however, and didn't care a fig about protocol.

The system also seemed to be based on 'fifties culture in-terms of where women were allowed to tread. We were expected to work in Paint & Trace as women weren't supposed to have creative ideas. Unless you were a character designer, animation was very much about meticulously copying the work of someone else.

At lunch one day, I was invited to join a drunken key artist from Australia, Tony something-or-other. He asked me if I was a feminist then handed me T-shirt. "I'll give you this if you promise to wear it in public." It was a Dead Kennedys shirt with the legend "Too Drunk to Fuck" on it, and a scrawled drawing of a Rodin sculpture next to it.

The Libyan Crisis was reaching a terrible crescendo as we struggled to complete the film. Odd things were happening. A taxi driver mowed down a small Indian girl outside our window and her poor little legs stuck out from under the car, with white socks and black Mary-Jane shoes. Our receptionist walked over an opening pair of doors in the sidewalk and broke her leg, sitting with a hip-high cast as we stood cowering at the sound of gigantic warplanes taking off for Libya and listened to the grim meanderings of a BBC reporter before going back to our desks to try and figure out how to depict radiation poisoning.



I suggested that people go red when irradiated, as it's like internal sunburn; others in the end decided to make Jimmy and Hilda turn green. We felt as if we were detailing our own hideous destiny. I, for one, started sleeping on the floor at the studio, to get more work done.

The Head of Rendering let me into their space and we were a crowded room of fifteen, each person working assiduously, but not quietly. Some listened to their transistor radios via earplugs; some gossiped; one girl's marriage to her rock star's roadie was disintegrating. She was young, with four children.

My husband called me from America eleven months into this odd sequestration. I told him I'd be coming home soon. "I'll help you find a flat." "What do you mean?" "Well, I've found someone else." There, in the echoing hallway, where everyone in the building could hear, I began to cry.

I came back into Rendering in shock. "I told you you'd lose your husband if you didn't go home", our supervisor crowed in triumph, a recent victim of a humiliating divorce. People called out suggestions as to what I should do next. "Take leave of absence, go back to San Francisco and patch it up" said my friend Lou.

I'd planned a trip to Siberia with my friend Fiona whom I'd met on a previous tour of Russia. She'd received a strange letter from the Russian government: "We are sorry to cancel the trip you planned to take on the Siberian Express, even though we had previously given permission. This is because we cannot guarantee that you, as tourists in our country, would be given adequate medical aid in the case of an unforeseen emergency such as a nuclear explosion."

Two weeks later, Chernobyl had its famous meltdown. I flew to America to sort out my life and while I was in a phone booth in downtown S.F. trying to negotiate a meeting with hubby, the radioactive rains from Russia began to fall.

When I returned to TVC, it appeared the only thing that had kept me employed was the fact that the checker had had a grudge against the company and had allowed work to pass that was not up to standard, much of which was mine. "It is not good to be 'creative' with line in Paint & Trace. What makes for a great artist makes for a lousy animator", I was told. What had been my only family for eleven months while I lived in my husband's auntie's flat in Chelsea was to be vaporised along with marriage, in-laws and a job all in one go, after the cast party.

There had been over forty two different animation companies in London when I began working for TVC in 1985. Slowly, however, they were moving to Dublin, where they would not be taxed. Eventually, of course, most animation moved east. *When the Wind Blows* was finished by Xeroxing paper to cel, in Korea.

I applied to go to Animation School. I found a fictitious address in order to be able to attend the school and then, oddly, was offered full time work at B&M Animation, the little studio that gained a sort of fame doing the simple flour ads for Homepride. I was in a quandary. I went to the Head of Department at the college to chat.

"You would do better to continue as an animation hopeful by being employed at B&M. Most animators, if they're lucky, only produce about ten minutes of their own work in a lifetime. That's especially true for women."

Heartbreakingly true in the case of George Dunning, our director from *When the Wind Blows*. TVC had gained fame for *Yellow Submarine*, but Dunning himself only managed to do a few short pieces on his own, most notably 1972's *Damon the Mower*, before his death.

I continued with B&M until I was fired three months into the job, then went to Oscar Grillo, the best in the business, but he was busy. There was a medical animation company that were willing to look at my work, if I drew a beating heart on spec.



I thought of Oscar Fischinger, who'd spent his whole life animating circles, studying rhythms, only to be used by a famous American cartoon industry and then cast off without credit.

The Canadian live-action animator Norman McLaren (*Neighbours*, 1952) spent years on his pixilated masterpiece about fences and territoriality. Next to poetry, animation seemed the second best way to never achieve recognition in a lifetime. Who remembers Halas & Batchelor? No, they're not a soup company. They did some of the best British animation ever. Look 'em up.

It is hard in today's digital world of immediate results to envisage an art-form that requires hundreds of people to work their fingers to the bone, drawing and redrawing everything from scratch, then photographing each copied drawing laid over a background on a heavy, complicated stand with an incredibly expensive stills camera attached to it. Labour intensive doesn't even begin to describe this elaborate and meticulous field. Comics are to animation what doodles are to sculpture.

In both cases the creator is giving birth to the magic of kineticism – movement and the potential for movement. Life in the round. I first became truly addicted to animation with *Fantasia*. Even today, when I watch it, I both waltz and weep. I am overwhelmed by the visual poetry of animation, and I love the breathtaking imperfections which only the human hand can supply. The names of many whose hands worked these wonders are all but lost to us, in terms of their personal achievements and lives. Yes, you'll see their names streak by as the credits roll, but you'll never know the personal sacrifices, the hours in half-light, the feelings of inconsequentiality that those who worked creating life on celluloid have felt.

The cruel studio bosses, the endless overtime never paid for, the poor salaries, the families not attended to, the flame of life itself given over to the Magic Lantern – hopefully still there in some form in the future, but laid down at terrible personal cost.

When you consider all the elements that had to be hand drawn like gravity, timing for oscillation, weight and force, character reactions and 'takes', feeling for size, effects of friction, air resistance and wind, rain,

water, snow, explosions, animation of physical objects, types and timing for 'walks', animal movements, bird flight, sun cycles, synchronised speech, lip synch, camera and peg movements – all done without rotoscopes or webs, it all adds up to a nightmare of tiny details to hand draw, page by page, cel by cel.

Hence the emergence of cheap 'n' cheerful Hannah Barbara and the advent of limited synch and static figure animation, more magnificently pre-dated by the likes of Terrytoons (UPA) characters such as Clint Clobber, Gaston Le Crayon and the wonderful Mr. Magoo (once scripted unsuccessfully by Aldous Huxley, a man with tragically poorer eyesight than this character, whom he knew nothing about). John Hubley was in great part responsible for the revolution in simple but marvellous backgrounds and characters – a great example is the Mr. Magoo vehicle *ROOTY-TOOT-TOOT*. The three best-known films made by John and his wife Faith are *MOONBIRD* (1959), *WINDY DAY* (1967), and *COCKABOODY* (1973). *OF STARS AND MEN* (1962) told a story about man and his Universe, *THE HOLE* (1963) was a contemplation of nuclear war and *EGGS* (1970) concerns world overpopulation via a dialogue between Woman as Fertility and Death, enlivened by jazz from Quincy Jones.

Here, in no order whatsoever, are my recommendations in terms of looking at what old-style non-digital hand-done animation can achieve. Youtube will show you at least excerpts of most of these: Oscar Fischinger – *Allegretto* (1936); Lennie Reininger – *Prince Achmed* (made with cut-paper figures); *Clint Clobber in Ballet Ache* (Terrytoons); *Gaston le Crayon* (Terrytoons); *Mr. Magoo* (Terrytoons); *On Mulberry Street* (George Pal); the Soviet export film *A Cloud in Love*; the Czech production of Roland Topor's *Fantastic Planet* (1973); Jan Svankmajer's *Faust* and *Alice in Wonderland*; Shanghai Arts and Studio Film's adaptation of the Chinese Monkey legends, *Havoc in Heaven* (1965); Shanghai Animation Film Studio's *Nezha Conquers the Dragon* (1979); Sarah Petty's independent productions *Picture Windows*, *Shadrac*, and 1975's *The Furies*; TVC's *Yellow Submarine* (the *Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds* sequence was done by an animation student against a last-minute deadline); Sally Cruikshank's indie production *Quasi at the Quackadero* (with art direction by Kim Deitch, underground cartoonist creator of *Hollywoodland*); and last but by no means least, George Pal's *Tubby the Tuba*.

There are many more quirky, beautiful and unique pieces of animation from the world over, many of which I watched avidly on Channel Four's late night animation series. That platform, alas, is no longer going and many of those titles and artists I am now unable to remember.

Please, someone – bring back a showcase for these marvels once again, and make them available to new generations before they are lost!

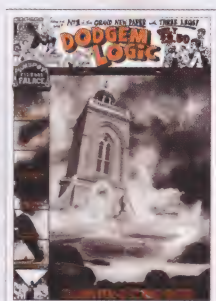


Please buy our shit.



Timmy the puppy is very sad. If you buy some of our wonderful merchandise and excellent back issues he may be happier, although the whole concept of happiness may be alien to a dog, especially a fictional one. Is a fictional dog even able to comprehend it's own existence? If so, could we all be the fever-dream of a fictional dog who is upset that you haven't bought an Astro Dick t-shirt yet?

Do you want to take that chance? Go to www.dodgemlogic/shop before the whole of this reality collapses!



Issue # 1 £2.50

Free CD "Nation of Saints" - 50 years of Northampton music. A brief history of underground magazines also featuring: Graham Linehan, Kevin O'Neill, Josie Long, Steve Aylett plus lots more.



Issue # 1 Signed Ltd edition £20

All of the above, but with the sorcerous scrawl of our glorious leader on the cover. A collector's item, methinks.



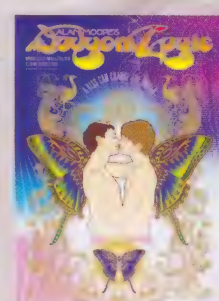
Issue # 2 £2.50

Three curvaceous covers by photographer Mitch Jenkins and Paul Chessell - Free 8 page comic starring everyone's favourite intergalactic penis 'Astro Dick' - written & drawn by Alan Moore himself - plus Anarchy, Strangeness, sock monkey mermaids, Steve Moore, Melinda Gebbie, Savage Pencil. It's very nice, what can I say?



Issue # 3 £3.50

Mind-bending wrap-around cover from the pen of the boss - Free Cheeky Iron-on T-Shirt transfer by Melinda Gebbie - Magic, Decadence, Graffiti, Robin Ince, Margaret Killjoy, Gary Mills, Ged Mathews, Josie Long and many more pages.



Issue # 4 £3.50

The most splendid cover art by John Coulthart. Free mesmeric 'Bohemia' poster, Dick Foreman, Steve Aylett, Deborah Delano and lots more besides - a truly amazing gallery of work from Melinda Gebbie - you name it, there is a very small chance it may be in the magazine.

T-Shirts

Alan Moore's Astro Dick T-shirts available in black and white. £10

Dodgem Logic heavy cotton T-shirts available in black and white. £10

Sizes : S / M / L / XL / XXL



Mugs, Mugs,
glorious Mugs,
Bigger than
thimbles but
smaller than jugs.



£10



£10





O'Neill



The Spinning Doctors

Keep Learning

by Doctor Feelgood

"Life is difficult" So starts Scott Peck's the **"Road Less Travelled"**. He suggests when people learn from the past, accept and understand it, their lives can be transformed. *"Once we know that life is difficult - once we truly understand and accept it - then life is no longer difficult."*

So why don't we keep learning?

Perhaps we are overwhelmed by the demand to learn caused by the pace of change, as we approach Alvin Toffler's "Future Shock".

Perhaps we are stuck in a place of pain, yet avoid it at all costs with addictive or distracting habits, rather than trying to learn from it. (*"The Pain That Heals"* by Martin Israel and *"Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway"* by Susan Jeffers transformed my approach to pain – learn from it rather than avoid it).

Are we just lazy, increasingly dependent on others, developing low self-efficacy and low self esteem by failing to take personal responsibility or discipline for our personal development? Perhaps the desire to pass on knowledge is viewed as less important than it used to be - perhaps common sense is dead (I recently read his obituary).

Are we too bored or too busy to notice or be amazed by the world around us?

Perhaps..... All of the above

Learning from the past so we can **be** in the present is not the only positive aspect of learning for our well being. Lifelong learning is one of the five fruits of well-being described by the New Economic Foundation. The five fruits are activities which individuals can be encouraged to include into daily lives that the evidence suggest will improve well-being.

<http://www.neweconomics.org/projects/five-ways-well-being>

Keep learning...

Try something new. Rediscover an old interest. Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Fix a bike. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food. Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident, and it will be fun to do.

Set goals

The practice of setting goals, which is related to adult learning in particular, has been strongly associated with higher levels of well-being. This is especially the case with goals which are self generated and congruent with personal values. As we progress or achieve our goal, self-esteem and self-efficacy improve, with increasing feelings of satisfaction this can improve our well being. As we learn a new skill we recognise our strengths, develop mastery and a sense of "flow" as we become fully focused in putting our strengths into operation. This is especially important in later life where we may lose some of our physical strength yet retain mental faculties, engaging in work or educational activities can help lift older people out of depression.

Learn 2 B

Northamptonshire County Council Adult Education Dept. has funded Changing Minds (the local provider for primary care mental health services) to develop a project called "Learn 2 B". Various well-being courses have been provided in community settings. These courses have enabled people to improve their well-being in new ways. Courses include: sleep management, meditation, cognitive behaviour therapy, yoga, creative writing, fishing and many more. Evaluation by the Mental Health Foundation has been positive demonstrating significant benefit. Indeed one of my patients who went to the sleep management course said this had transformed her life – I can't remember ever previously hearing that one of my referrals had **transformed** someone's life. Many people who have accessed one of the courses then go on to access other adult education courses and so the benefits to the person's well-being continue to grow.

http://www.changingmindscentre.co.uk/v/education_work

Meditation for Children?

Children benefit from learning in that it is vital for the developing brain to skills in social and cognitive develop. We should take the opportunity to teach specific wellbeing skills such as meditation or emotional intelligence that would help improve present and future mental well-being. This is beginning to catch on internationally, however nothing local yet.

Different Journeys

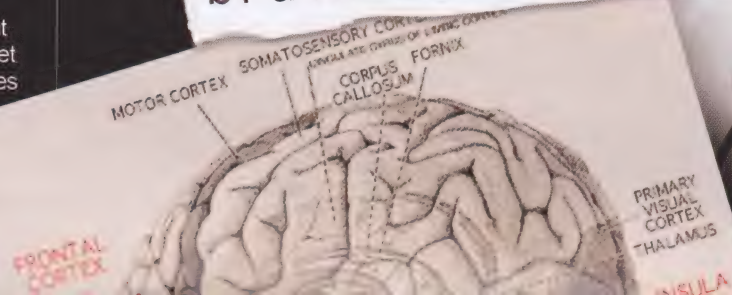
Learning doesn't have to be done in the classroom; there were plenty of opportunities for poets and artists to be more engaged in enabling people to see different ways we can achieve improvements to our well-being. Our local drug and alcohol service have produced a website with local artists trying to encourage people's different journeys to be described as well as to enable some funding for the local drug and alcohol service. You artists out there take a look!

<http://www.differentjourneys.ovendenart.com/>

As Bruce would say- "keep learning".

Learning and moving on from the past can help us be in the present and look forward with some hope to the future. Learning helps us develop awareness of our strengths and put them into practice including opportunities for social interaction which can improve our well-being.

brain stimulation



TWELVE STEPS IN THE WRONG DIRECTION?

By Nervy

Nervy wonders how you poor bastards out there know who to believe. Nervy used to be a very dutiful and god-fearing man who respected his elders and betters, until he realised a few years ago that even prospective Prime Ministers came into neither of those categories and that such people possibly no longer existed.

But you do have to believe someone when you are ill. Trust is part of the cure. So what the hell do you do? Nervy doesn't want to have to trust his therapist in the same way he has to trust the Easyjet employee who screws the engines on - that "close your eyes and fingers crossed" variety of trust.

Even though Nervy has never met Easy-Nutter, he knows that regulations will dictate that they follow an evidence-based manual, has at least one GCSE in Aeronautical Engineering, and of course one Airbus is much like another. So that their personal qualities need only to include some element of integrity and exclude narcolepsy and a psychopathic hatred of holidaymakers. Nervy can make no such analogous assumptions with a counsellor.

So firstly you do need to have some sense that the therapist is personally OK, but then you also need to know that the theory they base their therapy on ("the manual") is rational, ethical, and philosophically acceptable to you.

What to look for in a therapist

1) Accurate empathy

No crap like "I hear what you say" or, worse "I feel your pain". Not even "I know how you feel". You need someone who understands that your experiences, though analogous to many she has heard before, are uniquely yours; acknowledges what you are expressing but doesn't let you self-indulge your emotions - and can laugh with you.

2) Genuineness

No, you cannot fake that. But if she doesn't wear dangly ear-rings and look like a social worker it shows some effort.

3) Non-possessive warmth

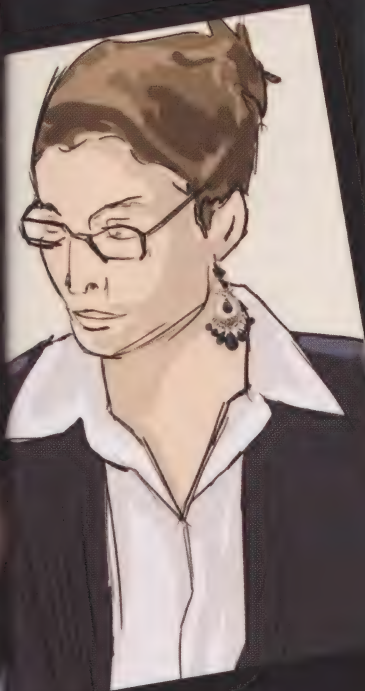
Someone who lets you know they like you, that you are OK. Who is friendly and shares something of themselves, but you both know that the relationship is one-sided and she does not need or want you. You have to make your own friends, but you may have to fall in and out of love with her before you do so.

Then the theory:

Go for the eclectic, bits from everywhere, life's rich pageant. Go for insight and understanding. Twelve steps in the wrong direction could be a long way off the mark.

And remember that just because a theory works in practice is not sufficient justification for its use. It also has to be ethically and philosophically acceptable. There's lots of ways Nervy could cure people's problems ranging from threatening them with violence to converting them to an extreme cult - because fear is very persuasive and any shared belief system is supportive. Until you get courage and stop believing. So of course it's best to believe the truth, which you will never outgrow. Simple.

"Believe in Nervy and he will save you from yourself."



EAT to the BEAT

JAMAICAN JERKED CHICKEN



'Jerk' cooking is unique to Jamaica, in fact even within Jamaica the 'secrets and home' of this fabulous cuisine is in the east of the island, in Portland. My dad Len's birth place Port Antonio, has quite a reputation and here in Northampton, his jerk pork is legendary; people have even requested it for funeral wakes! There is a history to preparing pork like this, the Maroons (runaway, enslaved people, who took to the mountains of Jamaica) would season the wild boar they caught with a mixture of pimento seeds and herbs, before cooking it over coals. Pimento seeds (aka allspice) have a gentle and unusual flavour and are used in sweet, savoury dishes and all sorts of delicious drinks. Over the last decade the wonderful flavours of this special method of seasoning have become known and loved far beyond the beautiful shores of Jamaica.

When I was last in Jamiaca, Suzanne my friend who's husband was sick and confined to bed, explored the local countryside and befriended a family living in the hills above Sheffield (no not that place of dark, satanic mills of yesteryear but a small village on the south west of Jamaica). The mum - Avril, (?) mother/sister/daughter/friend (?) of the family carrying her 5 month old baby in a papoose was tending her 'charcoal pits', and earned valuable income for the family making charcoal to sell to the hotels that lined the stunning, seven miles of white sand beaches of Negril. Jerking can be used to season / cook meat, fish and even vegetables (incl. tofu) and combined with the smoking on a gentle bbq, this will transport you to that generous island, Jamaica.


Most of seasoning for this dish can be obtained from West Indian and Asian shops around the Wellingborough and Kettering Roads and increasingly from the larger supermarkets.

Ingredients Serves 6

- 1 'Freedom' / Free-range chicken - washed (lime juice and salt), rinsed and jointed into quarters
- 2 tbsp jerk (medium) seasoning
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tbsp Jamaican - 'Appleton' rum (only a true JA rum will do it for me!)

Method

- Rub the chicken with the lime and sea salt, rinse and thoroughly pat dry. In a bowl mix all the remaining ingredients together and massage the chicken with them. Marinate for at least 6 hours (preferably over night).
- Pre-heat the oven to Gas 2, 100°C and pre-cook the chicken slowly for 40 minutes.
- Meanwhile light the bbq and allow to calm to glowing embers.
- Remove the pre-cooked chicken from the oven and place on smouldering bbq, turn once after 10 minutes. Cook on both sides and remove from bbq to serve.
- Serve with hot pepper and onion pickle, 'Festival' or white rice and salas / big herb salad.



MOORE(ish) BERRY TRIFFLE

This is one for Alan.... It's an impressive dessert, is gloriously tasty, quick to make and with looks so tempting with just the right amount of naughtiness to satisfy. And it has some of the best of Englishness - berries! It can even be taken for an outdoor picnic and assembled 'on site'! This is easy to do, and as we're out of the berry season, I use a packet of frozen summer berries from the shops! Berries are packed with Vit C and antioxidants and taste wonderfully tart and sweet at the same time. A great end to a meal or a healthy but indulgent snack.

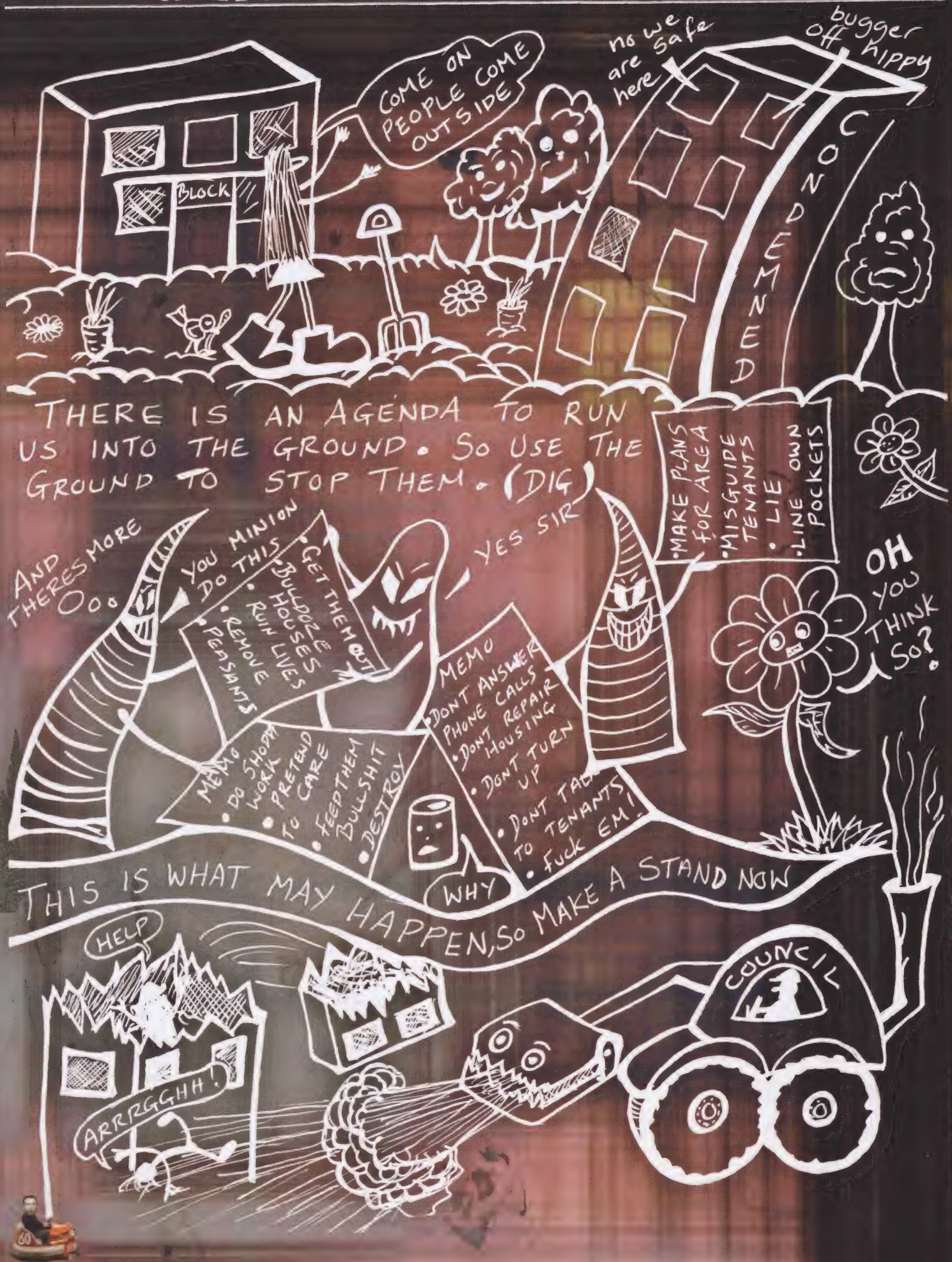
Ingredients

- 500g of frozen mixed summer fruits (strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, blackcurrants, redcurrants, cherries)
- 3 tbsp. Vanilla - infused fructose sugar or 3 tbsps sugar
- 300g plain couscous
- 1 unwaxed lemon - rind finely grated
- 200ml - boiled (hot) water with 2 tbsp honey OR heated apple juice
- 10 fl oz crème fraîche or creamy yoghurt

Method

- Place the fruits and sugar into a pan, heat, gently stirring until the sugar has dissolved.
- Allow the fruits to bubble gently for 5 mins more, then turn off and allow to cool.
- Place the dry couscous into a large bowl or plastic lidded container.
- Grate the rind of the lemon into the couscous and mix in well.
- Pour the hot water/honey or applejuice onto the couscous and stir briefly.
- Place a plate / lid on top of the container and leave to infuse for 10 minutes.
- Serve on a round platter (large plate) with the couscous on the outer circle, then fruits and yoghurt in the centre.

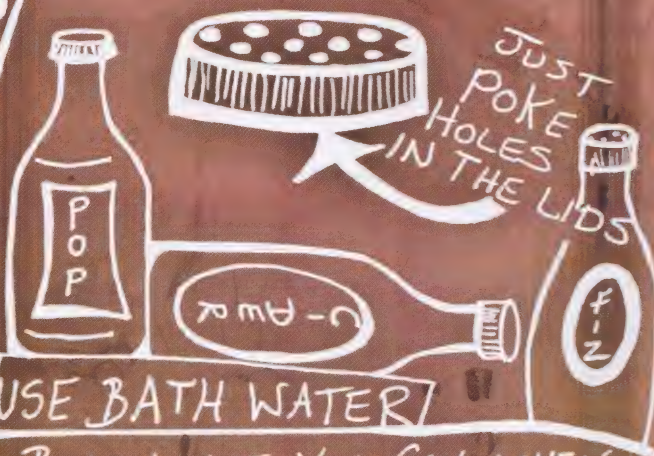
A MESSAGE FROM THE URBAN GUERRILLA GARDENER (OUR LAND) USE IT OR LOSE IT



THE URBAN GUERRILLA GARDENERS GUIDE TO BEING FRUGAL (OR WHEEDLING)



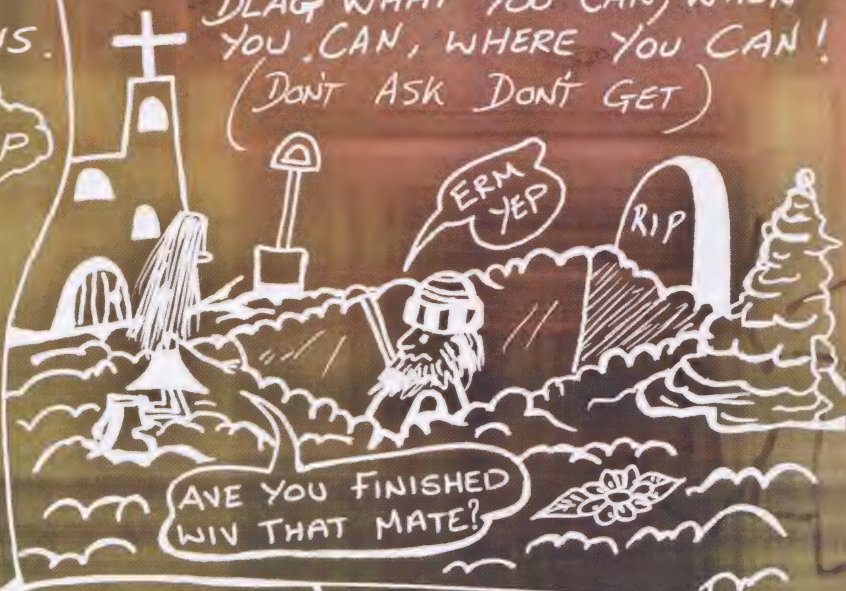
USE PLASTIC BOTTLES TO WATER YOUR PLANTS.



DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK TOP STORES FOR DONATIONS. (THEY CAN ONLY SAY NO.)



BLAG WHAT YOU CAN, WHEN YOU CAN, WHERE YOU CAN! (DON'T ASK DON'T GET)



SKIPS ARE A GOOD SOURCE FOR WOOD, TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT. ALWAYS ASK THE OWNER! YOU CAN BE DONE FOR THEFT. "SAD BUT TRUE". ALTERNATIVELY GO AT NIGHT!

AN OLD PUSHCHAIR



REMOVE CHILD FIRST

IS A MEGA TOOL STRIP IT DOWN. PUT SOME STRONG WOOD ON THE BOTTOM AND BE AMAZED BY HOW MUCH IT CAN CARRY. ALSO YOU CAN FOLD THEM UP (STORAGE)

NOW ON A "SAD" NOTE. I WISH TO PAY TRIBUTE



A MAN OF UNIQUE TALENT! 1942-2010



STITCH



THIS



WELCOME TO THE FINE-ART OF THE QUICK & DIRTY CUSTOMIZATION JOB...
A TOUCH OF GLAMOUR FROM THE LAISSEZ-FAIRE SCHOOL OF STITCHERY.

It's a fact. Jackets hide a multitude of podgy, poorly-postured sins and make you look expensive and sexually ambiguous. You can pick up a blank canvas in various charitable emporiums. There must be fifty ways to tweak your finds (well three at least) and make them all your own.....



For all of these you will need, needles, matching thread and sharp scissors...

Lucky Lapels

Give a regular looking jacket a bit of a rock'n'roll fluffing by adding a velvet collar and buttons. Velvet can be a royal pain in the butt to sew with but you need the variety of texture to give the effect here. Take your time it will be fine.

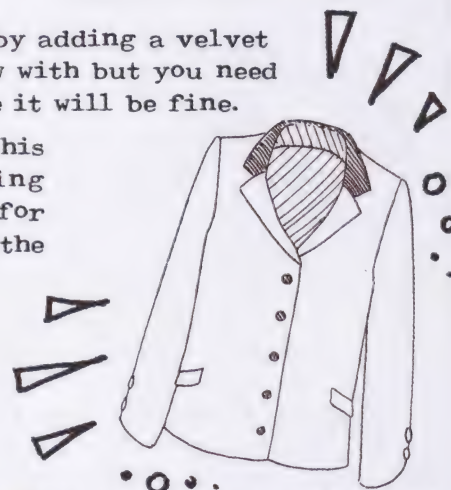
Ingredients...

Scraps of Velvet
definitely not stretchy stuff

Thin Paper to make a Pattern

Grease-proof baking paper is good but newspaper will do.

Don't be tempted to stick this one through the sewing machine, it will be bad for everyone. Hand-sewing is the order of the day.



- 1 Lay the jacket out over an ironing board, lining side up with the collar up, and lay the paper over it. Trace the edge roughly and then draw a cutting line another 5cm outside of this and cut it out, this is your pattern.



- 2 Lay the pattern onto the wrong side of the velvet making sure the pile of the fur is running up and down the collar symmetrically. Cut it out... Roughly.

- 3 Next lay the velvet onto the original collar and start to pin it into place. Always start in the centre and work outwards for an even finish.

First do the top edge, fold the spare cloth under the collar edge and pin. Next do the two seam edges where it joins the lower collar (fold it under). Then the two end pieces, fold a neat corner on the back, you might want to trim away some of the bulk if your velvet is really thick and lustrous.

Finally do the inside of the neck, remember you are sewing a curve, you will need to ease it into fit. You might find it easier to work over your knee than on a flat surface.

4



When it's all pinned down try it on - carefully! To make sure you don't have any major wrinkles. Then stitch straight through the whole outside edge with small neat stitches. Then sew the raw edge under the collar (you can't see this bit so don't worry too much!)

5

Finish the jacket off by replacing the buttons with fabric-covered buttons in the same velvet. The kits are cheap and easy to find and thoughtfully come with their own instructions.

Hurrah!



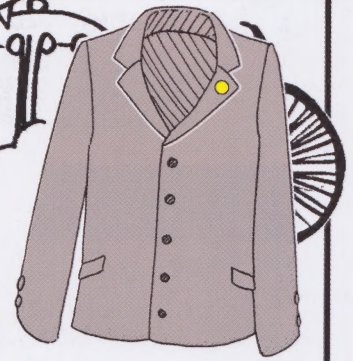
Definitely Not a Number

Whether you go for McGooohan-esque 60s chic in black and white or Edwardian Gent in neutrals its amazing what a bit of bias trimming can do for a chap. This is also a good way of sprucing up old jackets that are worn or moth-eaten on the collar edge.

Ingredients...

About 1.5m of cotton bias binding (13mm wide)

Using bias is pretty easy but you need to take your time and keep it nice and neat. Dont go crazy with the trimming, less is more.



How.

Unfold the bias strip and lay it wrong side up so the edge is flush with the collar edge. Sew along the crease nearest the collar edge with a running stitch. Start at the centre front of the jacket a few centimetres before the collar folds out.



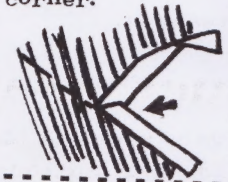
Turn the bias tape to the back and stitch into place.



When you get to the first corner cut the tape off flush with the edge and cast off your thread. Start a new piece of tape allowing a 2cm hang-over. This will give you a nice crisp corner and plenty of tape to tuck under and hide the raw ends.



The next corner is an inny so you dont have to cut the tape just make a neat pleat when you turn the corner.

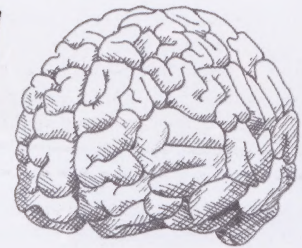


Repeat to fade....

I am aware that this is a lot of seemingly complex and technical information but it is easier to understand when you have the stuff in front of you. I have tried it out on monkeys...

Cannot be arsed with all that sewing?

Easy fixes for the attentionally retarded...



Roll up the sleeves. I know its a bit Crockett and Tubbs but its in again so what the hell. Better on small skinny girls than big sweaty men admittedly.

Swap the buttons. OK its a bit of sewing but it makes a massive difference and it will take you ten minutes and a couple of quid. Make sure your new buttons fit through the designated holes before you sew them on use 4ply thread and you will only need a few stitches. Metal buttons for military-chic, White for euro-pop-plastique.

Badges, badges always badges. Essentially anything interesting and light may be stuck onto a brooch back to create something unique and brilliant. Plastic toys, scrabble tiles, lego bricks... look around your tip of a house, I am sure there is a wealth of bespoke opportunity at your feet.

You will need to experiment a bit with the glue. Most stuff will stick well with a 2-part epoxy resin, some of it will be happy enough with a spot of super-glue. Either way stress-test it before you wear it outside, chances are it will drop off if you dont.

NB Dodgem Logic does not endorse any other form of glue-based experimenting.



Mrs Brown 2010

Because you are worth it



Alex Musson

Web designer by day, comedy mag writer by night. Mustard is photocopied in front of a live studio audience.

www.mustardmag.org/alex

Mustard
NORTHAMPTON EDITION

Andrew Waugh

Illustrator on Mustard Pages likes to write things and draw funny pictures, some of which can be seen at:

thismeanswaugh.blogspot.com



Barney Farmer/Lee Healey.

Writer barneyfarmer@hotmail.com and cartoonist Lee Healey leehealey@btinternet.com have worked together forever, in that time contributing to publications including Viz, Maxim and the one in your hands.



Claire Ashby

I do gardening, art work, chewing gum and kick ass. Hate politicians and red tape. I like being outside.



Calluz

Loves chrome, fat caps and drippy pens.



Dave Hamilton

Co-author of the Self sufficientish Bible and selfsufficientish.com. He also works as a freelance writer and runs wild food/foraging courses.

Contact: dave@selfsufficientish.com



David Underwood

David Underwood. Male, skateboarder of 30 years experience. B.S.O.H seeks active fun loving female with good balance for rolling, carving and grinding sessions. No Judge Judy fans.



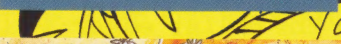
D. Wayne Love

Reverend D.Wayne Love. The very reverend dr. D.Wayne Love is 1st minister of the 1st presbyterian church of Elvis the divine singer in top pop group Alabama 3. He spray paints baby seals in his spare time.



David Quantick

David Quantick first worked with Savage Pencil at the NME. Since then he has written television comedy (Brass Eye, TV Burp), radio shows (One, The Beggars' Guide) and, most importantly, is the voice of Channel Four's Coach Trip.



Ellie Mains

Ellie Mains was roped into illustrate for Dave Hamilton's articles. Although this is her first ever commission, she has rather enjoyed it and would be willing to do it again.

Contact Eleanor.mains@gmail.com



Gary Ingham

Writer of Blank Stares and Cricket claps fanzine, and chief hassle stirrer of Broken Shackle Tabernacle live music promotions of Northampton. Gary was awarded a certificate for completing the 25 meters front crawl in 1986.

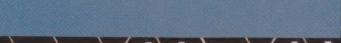
www.myspace.com/brokenshackle



Hoax

Creative team behind Dodgem Logic

www.thisishoax.com



Josie Long

Has been sent from the future to track down Sarah Connor. She lives in London, which is called "642 swamp" in the future



Kevin O'Neill

Stone Age comic book artist, who refuses to be dragged beyond the 19th century. Kevin has ink in his veins and dyslexia explains him having the worlds largest collection of com.



Lejorne Pindling

Writer, Presenter and Music Producer for "ill" aRekordz who can be found at www.illarekordz.webs.com, providing more beats, than I used to get from my Mum :)



Margaret Killjoy

Margaret Killjoy is an itinerant and adventurer who contributes regularly to SteamPunk Magazine and Strangers In A Tangled Wilderness. They have a blog:

www.birdsbeforethetstrom.net



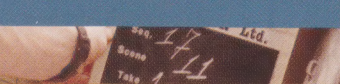
Martin Marprelate

Born in the 1500s, Martin Marprelate is thus forty or fifty years older than Bruce Forsyth but nobody's whingeing about him not getting a knighthood.



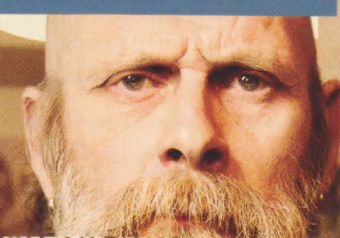
Melinda Gebbie

Former underground cartoonist, professional pornographer, author, sculptress, lecturer and illustrator of Lost Girls [Written by Alan Moore]. Melinda now resides in Northampton for her sins.



Mitch Jenkins

Contributing photographer Mitch Jenkins pictures have been an integral part of Dodgem Logic's Spring Boroughs Issue. Mitch is also working with Alan on their long term project Unearthing and will start filming his first short film later this year based on DL's Burlesque issue which Alan has written his first original screenplay for.



Norman Adams

A bit like The Ancient Mariner, but with a passionate tenants' rights agenda instead of an albatross.



Paul Chessell

Joining forces with Mitch once again after the Burlesque issue, contributing art director Paul Chessell returns for the Spring Boroughs cover and editorial. The collaborations continue with Unearthing and Mitch's film amongst an ever-growing list of projects. "The amazing thing about DL is being able to bring a creative idea to life without compromise... it's a rare and real privilege".



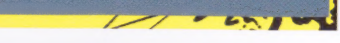
Robin Ince

My fingers are made of 1000 penguin paperback papercuts.

Savage Pencil

www.savagepencil.com

Email savx@savlab.demon.co.uk



Simon Cooper

Illustrator, GSOH, 21ish, honest reliable, short, hairy, likes drawing and colouring in.

www.cooperillo.com



Steve Aylett

Steve Aylett has written books such as LINT, Slaughtermatic and The Inflatable Volunteer, as well as comics like The Caterer and Get That Thing Away From Me.

www.steveaylett.com



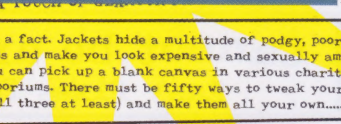
Steve Holland

Freelance author and editor for the past 20 years. My interests are old British comics, books and magazines.



Tamsyn Payne

50% CRAFTS, 40% CAKE, 10% MISCELLANEOUS... all woman...ish.



Tom Pickard

Tom Pickard is a god of English poetry currently living outside Newcastle and working on his autobiography. I mean, Jesus Christ, TOM PICKARD! how fantastic is that?



Wendi Jarrett

Wendi's food for health activities supports a range of local communities and their "getting to grips with food". She encourages sharing, teaching and learning.

Contact her on 07749873187 or email wendi4news@hotmail.co.uk



Local services

Welfare Rights Northampton
01604 636112

Citizens advice Northampton
0870 120 2433

CAN Northampton
01604 622121

Housing and debt advice Northampton
01604 623700

Homelessness
www.kirkbytrust.org.uk
Northampton Volunteers Centre
01604 637522

The Lowdown Northampton
01604 634385

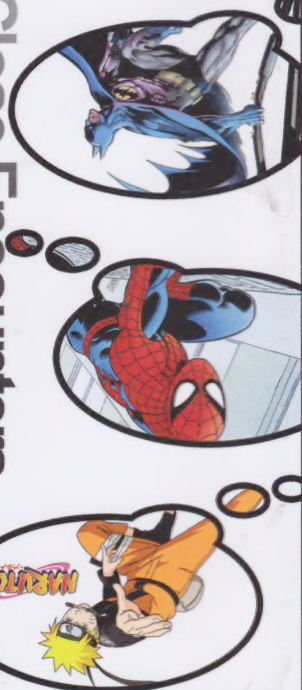


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